

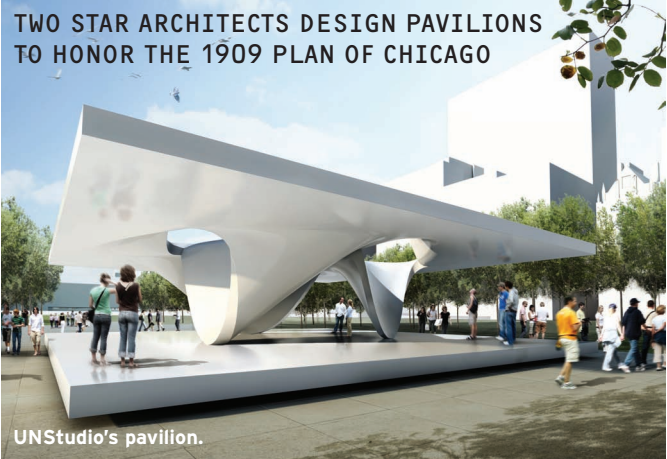
THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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TWO STAR ARCHITECTS DESIGN PAVILIONS
TO HONOR THE 1909 PLAN OF CHICAGO



UNStudio's pavilion.

COURTESY UNSTUDIO

CELEBRATING BURNHAM

On the 100th anniversary of Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago, two world-renowned architecture firms are erecting pavilions in Millennium Park to commemorate the Plan and express a vision for Chicago's future.

Zaha Hadid Architects and UNStudio were each chosen to

design a pavilion honoring the 1909 Plan, which brought Beaux Arts beauty and openness to Chicago through a network of green spaces and wide, Paris-inspired boulevards. The pavilions will stand in view of each other in the park between Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate* and Frank Gehry's *continued on page 19*

CHICAGO PREPARES TO DEMOLISH A MINOR IIT
BUILDING AND A GROPIUS CAMPUS, TOO



Gropius' Serum Center (1953-56).

GRAHAM BALKANY

MIES-ED OPPORTUNITY

An unassuming storage shed on the IIT campus was for decades ignored until plans for its demolition and replacement by a new train station stirred controversy. Suddenly, preservationists determined it was an unrecognized work of Mies van der Rohe and well worth saving; others claimed that the station was more important for the public good and the Mies building a throwaway.

Whatever the merits of either argument, there are bigger preservation fights in the offing: namely, Walter Gropius' Michael Reese Hospital campus.

On June 1, the city took control of the 37-acre campus with its 28 buildings all either planned or designed by Gropius, buying it for \$86 million as part of the hospital's bankruptcy proceedings, with plans to bulldoze the site *continued on page 14*

AN'S SPECIAL
MIDWEST EDITION

NEWS FROM 5 STATES, THE NEW AIC
UP CLOSE, INSIDE ADRIAN SMITH+
GORDON GILL'S STUDIO, & MORE.

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COURTESY SOM

SOM-DESIGNED OBSERVATION PLATFORMS
AT THE SEARS TOWER'S SKYDECK ALLOW
VISITORS TO WALK ON AIR

Get Vertigo!

As a Chicago tourist attraction, the Skydeck at the 103rd floor of the Sears Tower stands second to Shedd Aquarium. "We haven't been able to keep up," explained Randy Stansik, the observation platform's general manager. "Every time they add a new critter, they get people coming back, but what can we add?" Indeed, visitors come from all over the world to survey the tower's unimpeded, panoramic views, but once these are taken in, there's really nothing else to see. In mid-June, however, in a daring game of brinksmanship, the Skydeck is upping the ante on its rival by opening The Ledge, an addition that will add yet another vantage to its mix: straight down.

continued on page 11

THE WORST MAY BE OVER, JUST
NOT FOR REGIONAL ARCHITECTS

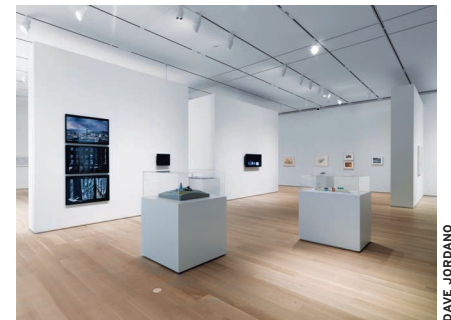
MIDWEST MALAISE

The recession may not be over, but the growing consensus is that the worst is past—including for architects. Still, not all parts of the country are recovering as quickly as others. With the near-collapse of the auto industry and manufacturing at large, the Midwest *continued on page 5*

AIC'S A&D DESIGN GALLERIES
NOW THE NATION'S LARGEST

Move Over, MoMA

Amid the frenzied adoration of the Art Institute of Chicago's Modern Wing, somewhat lost was news about its first galleries dedicated to architecture and design (A&D). To design watchers, the new permanent *continued on page 10*



DAVE JORDANO



INSIDE NEOCON. SEE PAGES 26-27

JERRY L. THOMPSON

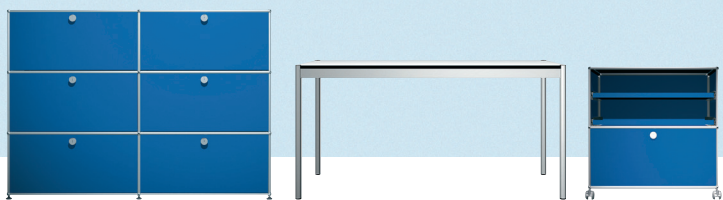
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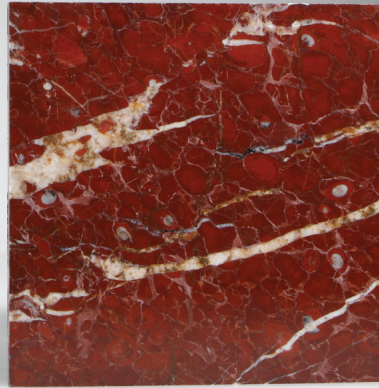
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TESTING THE WATERS

I soak up media news like a sponge. Whether it's a mogul profile, editorial smackdown, or high-flying launch, I search these stories for any possible nugget of insight or information that I can translate into a big opportunity for a small publication and that might help me steer a smarter course into new publishing territories, whether it be print, web, blog, twitter, or the next big thing.

Tina Brown said something in a recent profile of Si Newhouse in *New York* magazine that caught my attention: "I brought in the news gene," she is quoted as saying. "Newhouse came to understand that news was key to connection to the culture." I often try and understand why our publication package is working so well. Is it the local news? The insider details? The design? The smart focus of our reporting? Why do we get so many gracious notes and comments and even adoration from our readers when we are out and about? I think that it's all of the above—plus the gossip—and it just so happens that even though we call ourselves a newspaper, we are in fact a new kind of hybrid between a magazine, a newspaper, and a clubhouse that reaches a community by being relevant and also knowing what our readers care about. When it comes to local news, big events, and selected tidbits from all over, we connect our broad readership of professionals in the built environment to the culture of architecture.

Perhaps asking the question is what keeps the answer—and *The Architect's Newspaper*—so lively. We are just excited that it's working and that we are having so much fun while we're at it. So much so that we are hurtling on from launching our California issue in 2007 to testing the waters around Chicago. So here it is, folks, your first peek at the Midwest edition: premiering at NeoCon this June, with follow-up issues as of January 2010. We hope you'll soak them up, too.

DIANA DARLING, PUBLISHER

AN's Midwest-themed issue comes at an important moment for Chicago and the region. As it celebrates the centennial of the Burnham Plan, Chicago has seen the completion of a major new cultural building, the Renzo Piano-designed Modern Wing at the Art Institute, and is welcoming two of architecture's major talents, Zaha Hadid and UNStudio's Ben van Berkel, with commissions for temporary pavilions.

Beyond these already major events, there is a sense that the city is in the midst of a homegrown architectural renaissance. Chicago architects are again gaining national and international attention, with large offices creating skyscrapers and campuses of note at home and abroad, and smaller firms designing innovative cultural, community, residential, and commercial projects. Many of the institutions that make the city's architectural culture so rich have new leadership and an energized sense of purpose.

The region overall has been hit hard by the economic downturn, and architects, planners, and designers are working creatively to confront these new realities. There is much on which to report, from St. Louis to St. Paul. The Midwest edition is conceived as a truly regional paper, and this issue features stories from five states. As always at AN, we strived to showcase best practices, illuminate pertinent issues, and enliven the dialog on the future of the built environment. Midwestern readers, stay tuned. You will be hearing more from us soon.

ALAN G. BRAKE, MIDWEST EDITOR

MIDWEST MALAISE continued from front page continues to lag behind much of the nation, putting an additional damper on local firms.

Nationally, the AIA's Architecture Billings Index has risen to levels not seen since last summer. Inquiries have now hit positive territory, a benchmark left behind last September, when, along with billings, they began to fall to record lows in the index's 14-year history.

For March, billings nationally reached 43.7, up from 35.5 in February and a historic low of 33.3 in January. Inquiries rose to 56.6 in March, from 49.5. In April, billings were 42.8 and inquiries 56.8. A score below 50 means the index is falling, while a number above 50 means it is rising.

"This is the way cycles normally play out, with an accelerating decline, followed by moderating decline, and then moderating growth," said Kermit Baker, the AIA's chief economist. "Anything can happen, but certainly the broader news is pointing to things beginning to stabilize."

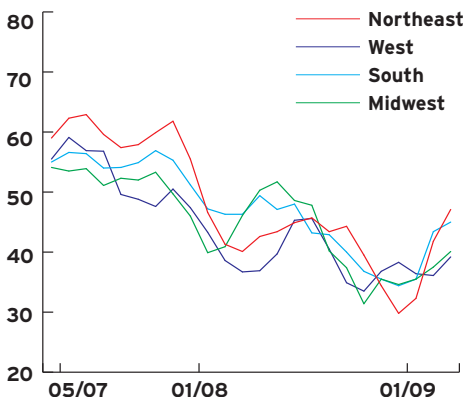
In some ways, this applies to the Midwest, too, but at a lagging pace. According to the regional billings index, the Midwest is up, though still further down than other regions. In April it had a reading of 40.1, up from 37.5 in March, and a low of 31.4 in November. The Northeast and South are faring better, at 47.1 and 45.0 respectively, while the West is slightly worse off, at 39.2.

This disparity can be explained largely by the unique challenges each region faces. In the Northeast, when banks collapsed last fall, it froze the economy, leading to the lowest localized readings ever, at 29.5. But when the bank bailout passed, credit returned, uncertainty abated, and the market shot back up. Meanwhile, the South has largely been buoyed by oil. California's looming bankruptcy and the Sunbelt housing bust have severely diminished confidence out West, while the uncertainty about GM and Chrysler's futures has impacted the Midwest.

Dave Zwicke, an economist at the Skokie, Illinois-based Portland Cement Association, points out that the Midwest was mostly spared the vagaries of the housing bubble, but still suffered when regional manufacturers cut production. "When durable goods orders went down, it really started to create problems," he said. And as the recession spread around the globe, driving down exports, it further worsened the situation. "The auto industry was lagging for a long time, but late last year when it really started to collapse, people started to notice," Zwicke said.

Alan Cobb, vice-president of AIA Michigan, believes the recent uptick is cause for hope. "It's been doom and gloom for a long time around here, but I think that's coming to an end," he said. **MATT CHABAN**

The AIA's index for architectural billings by region from May 2007 through April 2009.



LETTERS

ENGINEERS AT THE READY

More than 30 years of neglect of New York State's infrastructure cannot be reversed all at once. But the infusion of federal stimulus dollars offers an opportunity for the construction engineering community to lead a coordinated effort to return New York's built environment to a standard that residents urgently need.

Construction engineers are charged with ensuring that a structure is designed and built to ensure public safety and welfare, but the role of engineers

is much broader than is commonly perceived. We are not one-dimensional thinkers mindlessly punching calculators. The nature of our work requires that we be visionary in conceptualizing a project, analytical in problem-solving, and able to foster collaboration.

I have proposed a series of "town hall" meetings throughout the state with construction professionals, engineers, architects, developers, and others. Now is the time to capitalize on the Obama administration's

monetary lifeline to revitalize New York's built environment. Who better than construction engineers to spearhead this vital effort?

JAMES J. YARMUS
PRESIDENT
NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

CORRECTIONS

In the story "Nehemiah's New Look" (AN 08_05.06.2009), the name of the general manager at Spring Creek for the Nehemiah Development Corporation was misspelled. The general manager's name is Ron Waters.

er's name is Ron Waters.

In Eavesdrop (AN 10_06.03.2009), we misstated the number of directors for the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture at Columbia University's GSAPP since 1982. Following founding director Robert A.M. Stern, there have been four directors: Gwendolyn Wright, Richard Buford, Joan Ockman, and Reinhold Martin, who currently holds the post.



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EAVESDROP> SARA HART

MEIER IN A BOX

Pin-Up: Magazine for Architectural Entertainment features **Richard Meier** in its Summer 2009 issue. Turns out “architectural entertainment” is not an oxy-moron after all, at least not at *Pin-Up*. Meier poses on the cover with the box containing his \$1,800 limited-edition lifetime opus from Taschen. Box placement and the architect's sheepish grin remind us of that infamous **Justin Timberlake/Andy Samberg** SNL video skit. You know the one. It's that musical DIY about how to create an extremely personal boxed gift. Coincidence, or is *Pin-Up* just living up to its tagline? Buy the issue and tell us what you think. Buy it now.

ASYMPTOTE'S BUILDABLE BLOB

Eavesdrop loved the “Build It Bigger” episode on Discovery's Science Channel featuring the Asymptote-designed Yas Marina Hotel under construction in Abu Dhabi, which aired on June 1. Granted, every project in the UAE is the biggest, best, only, and first, but the Yas Hotel is truly an amazing grid-shell-veiled, buildable blob. Besides the building, the project's second-most glamorous feature is the Formula One Grand Prix raceway over which the hotel spans with extraordinary finesse. The show revealed the complexity of both design and engineering and the effort required to fast-track it into existence. As the signature component of the \$36 billion Yas Marina development, it must open its doors by October, making the raceway a literal reminder of the overall need for speed. Sidebar: Architects typically enjoy all the credit in the press, but Eavesdrop insists on credit where credit's due. Introducing the engineers: Arup, Dewan, Tilke, Schlaich Bergermann und Partner, Waagner-Biro, Centraal Staal, Red, Taw, and Front, Inc.

SHOCKED ABOUT SAADIYAT

Speaking of speed, the program's host, **Danny Forster**, casually mentioned that 50,000 workers are needed to maintain warp-speed construction for the entire region's multibillion-dollar developments. Now, that head count is big news: An 80-page report issued by the U.S.-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) claims “abuse and severe exploitation” of thousands of laborers at projects throughout the UAE, particularly those on Saadiyat Island (cue eye-rolling: Saadiyat is Arabic for “happiness”). HRW sent letters outlining the violations to **Jean Nouvel**, **Norman Foster**, **Zaha Hadid**, **Tadao Ando**, and other architects who are building island happiness. The recipients issued instant denunciations: We're shocked! Who could've imagined that tens of thousands of migrant workers from India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan could be vulnerable to exploitation? Here at Eavesdrop, we're 100 percent not for it.

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FAST TRAINS MAY COME TO THE MIDWEST,
BUT IS THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE?

RAIL READY?

Though it might not stretch beyond the Midwest at first, America seems ready to build a high-speed rail network. The Obama administration's plan abandons the idea of an Amtrak-like, coast-to-coast system, focusing instead on populous regions with congested transportation systems. The Midwest tops a short list of regions competing for the \$8 billion in federal funds for these projects.

What would this mean for architects? For starters, “We'll need to build railroad stations across the country,” said Rick Harnish of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association. If a high-speed system comes to the area, he claims, the already overcrowded Union Station would be busier than Chicago's Midway Airport. Harnish calls for a new station, admonishing the mayor's office for not making this a priority.

The potentially available

\$8 billion “will not be nearly enough,” Harnish added. Money must come from agencies at “every level of government.” With Illinois Governor Pat Quinn burdened by a budget crisis, and Mayor Daley focused on Chicago's Olympic bid, observers wonder who can build the popular support and provide additional funding to make high-speed rail a reality in the Midwest. On a recent visit to Chicago, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood suggested the creation of a Midwest high-speed rail czar to make the region a more attractive candidate for federal monies.

To generate ideas around the issue, Chicago Architecture Club's Burnham Prize competition asked architects to reimagine Union Station as a high-speed hub. Lindsay Grote, a Chicago architect whose proposal took third prize, agrees with Harnish that Union Station

will not be able to handle the extra capacity. “Union Station is already overcrowded, and has no connection to the El or the Loop,” Grote said. Instead of repurposing Union Station, he suggests building a multimodal station on empty land just south of the Loop. Cheyne Owens, a Chicago native who is currently a student at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, thinks that a high-speed rail hub would need to be more than just a train station. His second-prize-winning proposal keeps the existing Union Station intact, while adding several sculptural towers to create a “cultural icon.”

If these efforts succeed, Chicago will become America's first high-speed hub. David Goodman, architect and organizer of the Burnham Prize competition, believes it would positively impact the city: “Rail is in Chicago's DNA. It's part of why the city became important in the first place. A high-speed system would have the potential to reassert that importance for a new century.”

THOMAS MORAN

OPEN> LOUNGE

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WAYNE CABLE/SELFMADEPHOTO

On May 28, ROOF introduced the latest way to experience Chicago's skyline: a 7,000-square-foot rooftop lounge on the 27th floor of the Wit Hotel that offers a 360-degree view of the city, Italian cuisine, gourmet cocktails, and contemporary design by the Atlanta-based firm The Johnson Studio. “We wanted to create something that hadn't been done or seen in Chicago before,” project designer Juliana Kerschen told AN, “The concept behind ROOF was to have more of a nighttime spot, even though it's also for daytime. We wanted a modern-hip-urban feel.”

The boundaries between outdoors and indoors are blurred in a flowing space with an outdoor patio and floor-to-ceiling glass windows. Layers of glass produce an aqua green color deployed as a theme throughout the space, while suspended lighting tracks create a cosier feeling to counterbalance the vastness of 20-foot-high ceilings. The sense of arrival is disrupted by moving the back bar to the front, forcing visitors to go around it in order to enter the space. Shadows and movements visible outside entice guests to discover what is inside this glittering glass box on top of the city. **MARIANA RODRÍGUEZ ORTE**

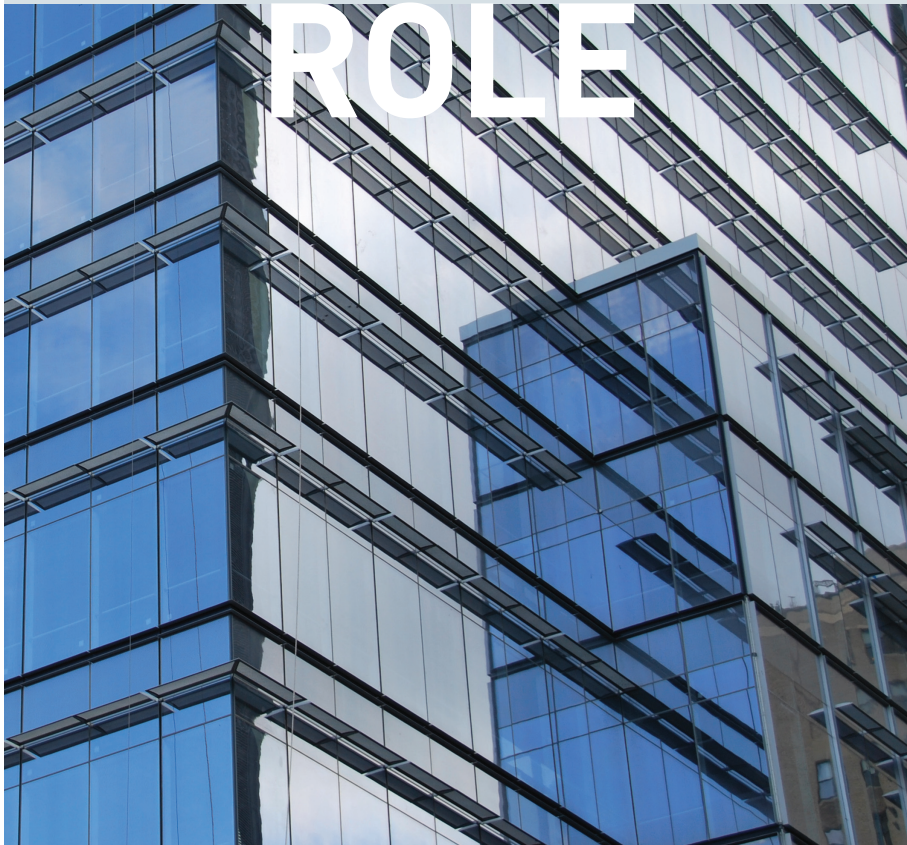
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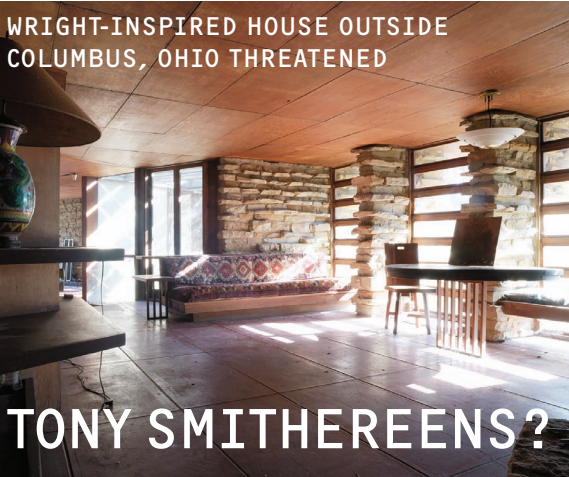
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WRIGHT-INSPIRED HOUSE OUTSIDE COLUMBUS, OHIO THREATENED



TONY SMITH HEREENS?

Tony Smith, renowned painter and sculptor, began his career as a Taliesin Fellow under Frank Lloyd Wright. One of his early houses, the 1940 Gunning House outside Columbus, Ohio, is now for sale, and a developer wants to buy the property to demolish the house in favor of commercial use. Designed with Theodore van Fossen and Laurence Cuneo, the Gunning House sits on a

2.5-acre site overlooking a ravine and fronts a now busy thoroughfare. A later owner added a landscaped berm that conceals the house from the road.

The house, with its wood-paneled and stone interiors, and the property, which includes a three-story studio tower and a carport, are listed for \$275,000, according to Bud Byrne, a real estate agent at Vannatta Brothers.

The house has been empty for three years and needs substantial work. "It's going to take someone who gets it. As every moment ticks by, the work gets greater," said Kathy Mast Kane, executive director of Columbus Landmarks, a preservation group that has been working to save the house. The Tony Smith Estate, and his daughters, the artists Kiki and Seton Smith, have visited the site and are working to bring attention to its plight. "It's his first house coming off his Wright apprenticeship," said Sarah Auld, director of the Tony Smith Estate. "It's all of a piece: the architecture, the sculpture, the painting."

According to Mast Kane, the house is one of the first modern houses in the region and an important precursor to Rush Creek Village outside Columbus, a nationally recognized Wright-style community designed by van Fossen. **ALAN G. BRAKE**



BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PATH LINKS ARTS DISTRICTS AND GREENWAYS

INDY'S TRAIL BLAZERS

The revitalization of Central Indianapolis created several thriving "cultural districts" in the downtown area, anchored by institutions such as the Indiana Repertory Theatre and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. These districts are disconnected by distance and by gaps in the urban fabric, but the Central Indiana Community Foundation has developed a plan to fix that: the Indianapolis Cultural Trail. A unique urban loop linking the cultural districts together with fully segregated pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, the trail is to be carved out of 18 to 36 feet of space on eight miles of downtown streets. Beyond pure functionality, the foundation wanted to "create an inspiring space for people," according to president Brian Payne.

A short teaser segment of the trail opened last year. The major northeast segment recently broke ground. It will connect the Cultural Trail to the Monon Trail, the city's principal rail-trail. A northwest segment linking to downtown's Canal District and the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis campus will also be built this year.

The trail will also feature \$2 million worth of public art and a bike-share system mod-

eled on the Paris Vélib. To maintain, market, and improve it over time, \$5 million of the \$55 million budget is being set aside as an endowment to support the trail, with the non-profit Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc. formed to manage it. The trail is largely being built with \$40 million in private funds and \$15 million in federal funds. The trail is not costing city taxpayers anything.

"This is bigger, bolder, and more beautiful than any urban trail being built in the world today. In terms of impact, we hope this will be our Millennium Park. Only this is more innovative," claimed Payne.

Unlike a typical roadway project, the Cultural Trail design team is headed by a landscape architecture firm, Rundell Ernstberger Associates. As principal Kevin Osburn argued, "Architects don't think first about cars; we think about everybody." Osburn's design features a two-way bicycle trail separated from the street by landscaping and "rain gardens" used for green stormwater management, then another landscaped buffer and a completely separated pedestrian pathway for much of the trail's length. The trail makes extensive use of native plantings, and is in effect a linear park. The width is made possible by the city's wide streets. Indianapolis was laid out as a grand capital city by Alexander Ralston, a one-time assistant to Washington, D.C.'s famed planner Pierre L'Enfant. These wide streets meant lanes could be taken away from cars without reducing the level of service.

Osburn was inspired by the city's George Kessler-designed greenway network, and the trail is intended to be the downtown hub of that system. He specified high-quality materials such as concrete pavers instead of a plain asphalt path, and dense, low-mast street lighting to make the trail feel safe 24 hours a day.

More important to Osburn is the trail's effect on the city's future: "We want to reimagine the streets of our city for the 21st century." **AARON M. RENN**



COURTESY THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION

At 92 stories, with condominiums and a hotel, the SOM-designed Trump Chicago tower is the tallest building in the city since Sears. Recently, Joe Valerio, principal of Valerio Dewalt Train and designer of the tower's restaurant, Sixteen, chatted with Ivanka Trump about Chicago, design, and the future of the Trump brand.

Joe Valerio: What were your expectations of Chicago, what surprised you?

Ivanka Trump: It exceeded my expectations. I had an image of Chicago, but until I became involved in this project, I didn't really understand what it was about. I was blown away by the quality of buildings from an aesthetic standpoint, the really beautiful architecture in a very clean city. One of the things that makes our project, particularly the restaurant, so unique is that there is a great play on the tops of these beautiful towers. You see the gothic architecture of the Tribune Building, the Wrigley Building and then you see out to the lake, so it's an unobstructed view decorated by these world-renowned buildings.

Describe this new building.

Well, if you look at Trump Tower NYC, it's emblematic of the Trump brand but still relevant today. We still achieve the highest numbers on the saleable real estate and attract the best retail tenants. We're in a phenomenal location. As we speak, I'm sitting in my office on 57th and 5th. It was built in the early '80s, but continues to be very relevant today. We hope that will be true of Trump Chicago.

Of course, Trump Chicago is a very different building. It's a unique, mixed-use building, but the early accolades have been a validation of our collective vision.

Would you like to comment on where design is going right now?

You know better than I do! I'm a student through observation, and have had the great fortune of working with some of the best architects and interior designers, but I think that the exciting thing about design is its constant reinvention. Right now we're at a point of great upheaval, and that's going to make its mark on architecture and interior design, so you never really know what direction it's going, but instinctively, you hopefully choose the right one, and so far, we've done that.

What do you like most about the restaurant?

No knock on you, Joe, but I think it's the view. That's one thing that you can't own,

but you did try to frame it.

The whole design intent was to maximize the space as opposed to dominate it with something overly complicated.

From an interior design standpoint, I think that the wood paneling is top-notch. The sense of entrance, with the incredible wine gallery on either side, is sophisticated and in line with the building itself. One of my favorite aspects is the lighting, both in the deconstructed chandelier in the casual dining area and the formal chandelier in the main dining room.

My interview with your father was rough. The question I never had the nerve to ask is, why did I get the job after that interview with your dad?

One of the things we look for in all the people we work with, not just relating to architecture and design, but everyone: We like to collaborate with people who can innovate—meaning, they can define a fabulous vision that is buildable. At the end of the day, if what you designed was fantastic but could never come to fruition or be built by a person of sound mind, you wouldn't be doing your job. The design has to be commercially reasonable, while incredibly luxurious.

You were the first person we met with in Chicago that got it and that allowed us to contribute to the thought process and own the design with you, while simultaneously having great conviction in what you thought needed to be created.

Was the role of the client discussed when you were at the Wharton School of Business at Penn?

That's an interesting point that hadn't occurred to me before, but it was definitely not something contemplated at Wharton. There was a general idea that those who have great privilege bear a great responsibility, but not that particular responsibility; the line wasn't drawn to the aesthetics of the environment around us.

You may have already touched on the next question, but the architects reading this would probably enjoy your expanding on the qualities that you look for in a design professional.

I think one of the other things I look for is somebody I can work with on subsequent occasions. Though, we work with many different designers. Each property has its own unique sense of place.

You need to find somebody who is able to reinvent himself or herself, and who isn't so wedded to one product type or one approach and who has the willingness to respond to our issues with their own creativity.

Obviously, you look at yourself as a businesswoman, but do you view yourself as a builder?

My grandfather was a great builder. That's how he referred to himself. I think if my father could choose to have one thing remembered about him, it wouldn't be his financial prowess. It wouldn't be his strength in the entertainment industry. It would be his ability to build the finest quality product in an efficient, professional way. He really is a great builder and that's something I've always been drawn to as well, and that's something that's a skill that you don't improve and you don't hone overnight. You learn through trial and error. So as the next generation of developer, that's something that is very important to me.

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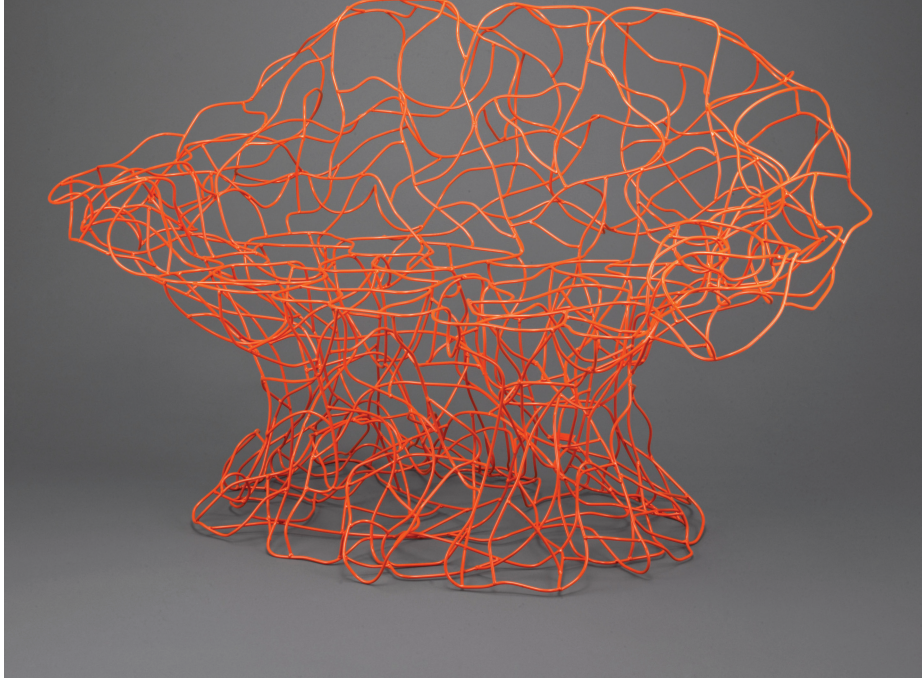
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 17, 2009

Fernando and Humberto Campagna, Corallo Bench (2006). Right: Tokujin Yoshioka, Honey-Pop Armchair (2001).



MOVE OVER, MOMA continued from front page collection is proof of a growing interest around the design disciplines in the museum world. But greater visibility for A&D also demonstrates the bold aspirations of the Art Institute as a whole: Since James Cuno assumed the position of executive director in 2004, he's been intent on solidifying the museum's place in the top tier of encyclopedic institutions, and on extending the reach of

A&D beyond Chicago.

The Art Institute established its architecture department in 1982 to consolidate its impressive holdings of architectural drawings, plans, and artifacts that had been previously contained within other departments. "Design" was added to its name in 2005. Today, according to museum press materials, the 250,000 items in its collection represent the greatest number in all the museum's curatorial

departments. The museum points out that it is only one of four American art museums with an architecture department, and its 8,000 square feet of design galleries surpass MoMA in exhibition space.

During its first two decades, the architecture department made its reputation with work that spotlighted Chicago's place as a mecca for architecture enthusiasts. With the arrival in 2005 of department director Joseph Rosa, previously at SFMOMA and the National Building Museum, the focus was no longer exposing Chicago to the world, but bringing the world to Chicago.

To achieve parity with other curatorial areas, Rosa and his staff had to sift through its collection to distinguish between art and archival items, a task that morphed into a treasure hunt. "We'd be going through the vault, and I'd see something," said Rosa, "and I'd say 'Wow! We have *that*!'"

The inaugural display of holdings, which will rotate every six months, offers a tantalizing glimpse into the department's collection. Unlike the gallery spaces on the other side of the wing's grand court, the A&D galleries do not redundantly circulate, so the visitor experiences the space through a single path. It begins with drawings and models that reflect the great legacy of Chicago—Sullivan, Wright, Mies—and continues with work from more local and international luminaries before segueing into the design section.

Since assuming the newly created post of design curator, British-born Zoë Ryan has overseen an acquisition spree, aiming to assemble a collection that she says reflects "new ways of making and thinking about design," and that "speaks to us in emotive,



COURTESY ART INSTITUTE

conceptual ways."

Among the acquisitions on view: furniture by the Campagna Brothers, Marcel Wanders, and Hella Jongerius; lighting from Ingo Maurer; tableware by architects Zaha Hadid and Greg Lynn; and graphic design from Bruce Mau. Included as well are industrial design objects like IDEO's kidney transporter, and the One Laptop Per Child PC, from a collaborative including Yves Behar. Behar is also represented by *Anima Terra*, a LED light fixture/sculptural object commissioned by the department. Perhaps more than any item on display, it speaks to the nature of design object as art.

Rosa feels the department should offer exhibitions that give the visitor the elation of discovery that he felt looking through the department's vault. "We want to map the culture," he said, "showing pivotal works that illustrate the change in trajectory of design."

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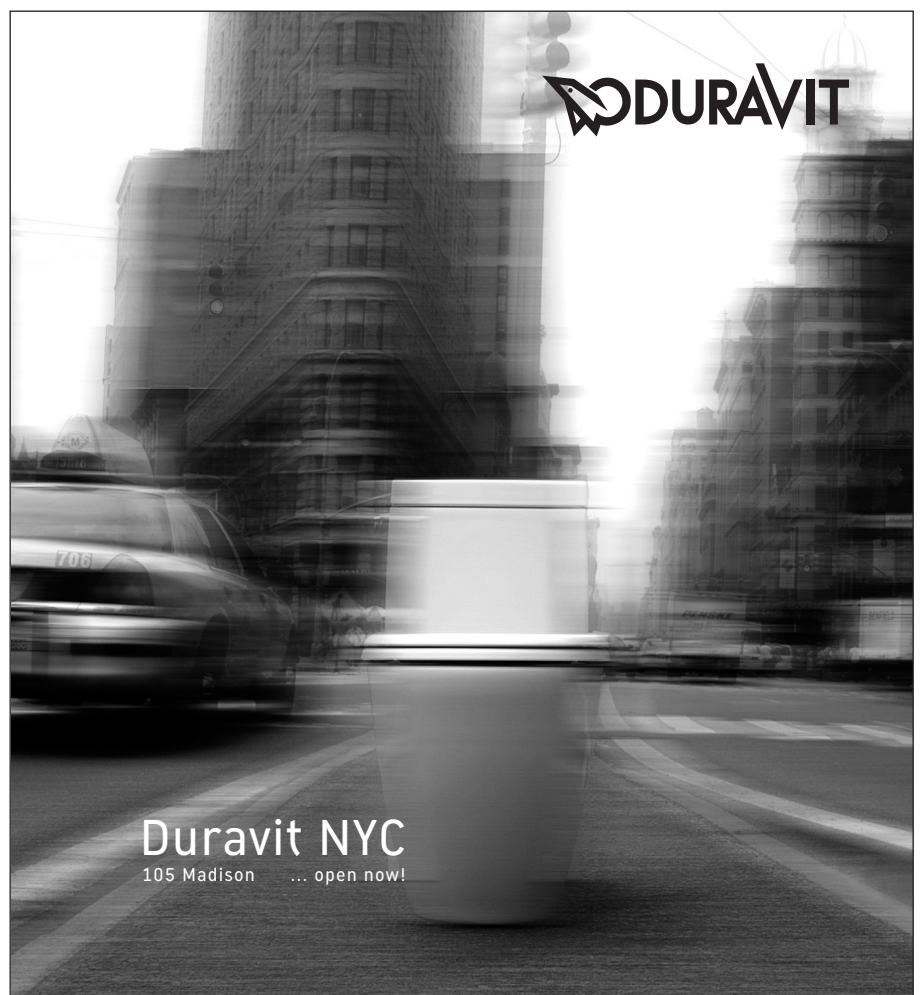


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MASSIVE NEW PROJECT PLANNED
FOR HISTORIC ST. LOUIS WARDSTHE NEW
NEIGHBORHOOD

A huge proposed redevelopment in North St. Louis, in the works for years behind closed doors, is going public as the developer starts meeting with residents and public officials. Conceived by McEagle Properties, the NorthSide would encompass much of one city ward and parts of four others in the blighted, historically black area. The company, which has already spent \$46 million and purchased 900 properties, plans for the development to encompass 500 acres, with 4.5 million square feet of new office and retail space and 10,000 new homes.

Helmed by CEO and Chairman Paul McKee, McEagle is first tackling an explanation of its secretive process of property acquisition, under which it used several front companies to buy and leave numerous buildings without maintenance for years, causing angry residents to demand answers at a recent public meeting. One of the properties that has seen visible decay is the Clemens mansion, built in 1858 by a relative of famous Missouri son Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain. "In order to make the project feasible, we had to buy property under the radar screen," said Bill Laskowsky, chief development officer. "Economic development takes land."

Close to downtown but with many vacant lots and abandoned buildings, the area is a clear candidate for redevelopment. Several concepts have been floated through the years, going back to the 1940s when a plan-

ner urged that huge areas be cleared. At that time, the city's population was still on the rise, peaking at 856,000 in 1950. The census now puts the city at 355,663.

The 15-year McEagle plan wants to draw people and businesses back. In addition to rebuilding the decayed infrastructure with the help of tax increment financing, the company plans on a 40-story office tower and four "job centers," essentially large corporate campuses.

"I think it's a good vision. I don't think I would call it a plan," said Michael R. Allen, assistant director of the Landmarks Association. "We're at the very starting point. We don't have detailed drawings or even detailed site plans." Allen moved to North St. Louis three years ago during the peak of the property acquisitions, and saw entire blocks go vacant. "What is disappointing is that neighborhood rehabilitation always involves displacement of existing populations," he said.

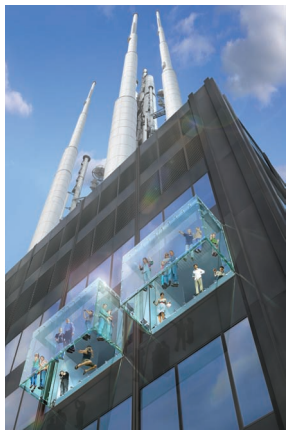
Laskowsky said that with the new construction, keeping the architectural style, particularly for infill areas, "would be the order of the day."

Allen said he thinks there is a lot to like about McEagle's plan, but has serious concerns about the boarded-up properties. "A lot of the buildings aren't in good enough shape to last." **MIRIAM MOYNIHAN**



Proposed project areas in green.

COURTESY MCEAGLE PROPERTIES



COURTESY SOM

GET VERTIGO!

continued from front page

Following such glass-bottomed North American predecessors as Toronto's CN Tower and The Skywalk at the Grand Canyon, The Ledge is made up of four glass boxes that cantilever out from the west face (the only elevation that features a sheer drop from parapet to sidewalk). Once installed, the stout-of-heart will be able to walk more than four feet "outside" of the building's curtain wall and experience the sensation of floating 1,353 feet above Wacker Drive. "This is one view that hits you right between the eyes," boasted Stansik.

Choosing an architect was a no-brainer for the Skydeck management. They went straight to the tower's original design firm and structural engineer, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). "We've done this on a number of our classic projects," said SOM design partner Ross Wimer. "We've had a chance to revisit and try to stay consistent with the aesthetic, but also do these updates."

In designing The Ledge, however, SOM placed a greater value on creating 21st-century transparency rather than mimicking the building's 1970s vocabulary. The team did not even consider replicating the existing bronzed windows, and instead selected triple laminated water-white glass, which transmits 98 percent of light. There is no visible frame, either. The roughly one-inch-thick structural glass panels, each made up of tempered lites with plastic interlayers, are joined by small, unobtrusive pinned connections. These pinned connections also join the ledges to steel frames concealed within the ceiling, which cantilever from

beams at the 104th floor. The choice of material and minimal structure do not equate to frailty, though. Tested for wind and snow loading, the ten-foot-high-by-ten-foot-wide-by-four-foot-deep glass boxes are built to code for areas of public assembly, meaning they are capable of supporting live loads of 100 pounds per square foot.

In addition to delivering a gut-wrenching experience while ensuring no one actually plummets to the ground, the designers had to contend with one other factor: the window washing system. The glass boxes promised to be a real impediment to the facade-access baskets, which drop straight down the building's face. In answer, SOM designed The Ledge's modules to retract into the building. Linear chain drives in the ceiling can pull each box inside or push them out along tracks that function much like a sliding drawer's mechanism. Pneumatic gasket systems around the boxes' perimeters deflate when the assembly is in motion and inflate when in place to create a seal.

AARON SEWARDPERMANENTLY
MAD

Revamped icon **2 Columbus Circle** doubled gallery space for new owner **Museum of Arts and Design's** (MAD) expanding collection of rotating exhibits. Yet what's captivating visitors is a new permanent display: the cable-suspended ceremonial stair designed by **Allied Works Architecture**. Functional and beguiling, it floats on threadlike wires amidst ever-changing shows of celebrated sculpture, earning its place as another example of the museum's commitment to contemporary handicraft.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 17, 2009

STUDIO VISIT > VINCENT JAMES ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

AUB HOSTLER STUDENT CENTER



MULTIFAMILY HOUSING



Vincent James Associates Architects (VJAA) speaks softly but carries a big stick—meticulous research. Based in an understated office in the Minneapolis Warehouse District, the 18-person firm creates pristine work that crops up in the most unexpected places—New Orleans, Beirut, penthouses in New York and Chicago, and a Benedictine abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Since principal Vincent James left Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, then hired Nathan Knutson out of University of Minnesota architecture school and was joined in 1997 by his London-educated wife Jennifer Yoos, the boutique firm has produced a string of sublime buildings that award jurors can't resist; every completed project has won at least one accolade.

The largest project so far is the 200,000-square-foot Hostler Student Center at the American University in Beirut, a three-block landscape of simply shaped and beautifully detailed buildings and walkways that tumble down the hill from the original campus to the city's cornice. VJAA won an invited international design competition after rejecting the competition brief of one large building and one large—and impossibly hot—plaza. Instead, the firm analyzed the city's figure-ground relationships, the angle of the Mediterranean sun, and the flow of ocean breezes from day to night, and designed five separate buildings stitched together by passageways recalling the city's narrow streets.

Like the expanded and renovated student union at Tulane University in New Orleans, the Hostler Center uses minimal air conditioning. Water walls, geothermal cooling using seawater, green roofs, and natural ventilation illustrate VJAA's unusually deep sustainability savvy. The design process starts with micro- and macro-climatic analyses. "Integrating sustainable design early on ensures that it is part of the building's form and concept, not an additional complexity," said Yoos.

Cultural research also animates VJAA designs. The movement of an oar's stroke inspired the graceful geometry of the roof of the Minneapolis Rowing Club boathouse on the Mississippi River. The principles of comfort and frugality in the Rule of St. Benedict were reflected in the minimalist but hospitable design of the guesthouse at St. John's Abbey—a project VJAA inherited after Japanese architect Tadao Ando's design exceeded the abbey's budget.

A walk through the firm's understated Warehouse District office illustrates the penchant for precision. A one-inch-to-one-foot model of a significant house stands next to a full-scale mock-up of one of its rooms, complete with an acoustically innovative ceiling and a simulated Cor-ten steel wall. "We're working with a metallurgist to get the right finish on the Cor-ten. We want it to be like a Richard Serra sculpture," Yoos said. "We tend to test everything that's critical."

For VJAA, that's everything from the geography to the feel of a granite floor. **LINDA J. MACK**

HOSTLER
STUDENT CENTER
AT THE AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
BEIRUT,
LEBANON

VJAA rejected the competition brief of one large building and one large—and inhospitable—plaza to design five separate buildings arranged to shade walkways, capture breezes, and provide welcoming indoor and outdoor spaces. There's even a rooftop terrace cooled by nighttime ocean winds. Since opening in May 2008, the three-block complex has become an integral part of the city's fabric.



BLESSED SACRAMENT CHAPEL,
ST. JOHN'S ABBEY CHURCH



EXHIBIT WALLS



PENTHOUSE APARTMENT



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: PAUL CROSBY; ALL RENDERINGS VJAA

**MULTIFAMILY
HOUSING**
BOSTON,
MASSACHUSETTS

After being on hold, design has recommenced on a ten-story, 100,000-square-foot apartment building for an empty corner in redeveloping South Boston. The developer, Pappas Enterprises, called for LEED platinum certification—a challenge when the longest wall in the single-loaded building faces west. A “performative veil”—a screening system separate from the structure—will shield the wall from heat gain but allow light and air to flow into the apartments.

**EXHIBIT WALLS,
EERO SAARINEN:
SHAPING THE
FUTURE**

Finnish architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen experimented with molded plywood throughout their careers. Given the soft forms found in the Saarinen-designed Christ Church Lutheran in south Minneapolis, VJAA developed exhibit walls used to display photographs of the church for a major exhibit in a similar manner. Sinuous panels were molded in a modern version of Charles Eames’ Kazam machine, then digitally routed and tabbed together to create walls that support themselves. Site Assembly collaborated on the exploration of skin as structure.

**PENTHOUSE
APARTMENT**
MIDWEST

The newly completed, 5,500-square-foot flat occupies the top floor of a 60-story highrise in a major U.S. city. In typical VJAA fashion, a simple palette of materials is used in a sophisticated way to define space and modulate light. Walnut walls that turn into slatted ceilings create dining, living, and kitchen areas. Perforated aluminum screens and white walls bring light into deeper spaces and highlight the client’s Asian art. A rubber playroom includes a climbing wall.

**BLESSED
SACRAMENT CHAPEL,
ST. JOHN'S
ABBAY CHURCH**
COLLEGEVILLE,
MINNESOTA

A former pastor’s office next to Marcel Breuer’s 1961 Abbey Church, a landmark of exposed concrete construction, was reworked as an intimate meditation space. Wood panels create a modern reredos wall that both holds the Blessed Sacrament and allows diffused light into the serene space. Platinum leaf on the ceiling echoes Breuer’s subtle touches of gold, platinum, and copper in the church.



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 17, 2009

Mies' Test Cell building at IIT (1950-52).



KENDOMAN 26/FILICKR

MIES-ED OPPORTUNITY continued from front page so it can be redeveloped privately into an Olympic village as part of the city's hopeful bid for the 2016 summer games. Preservationists are dismayed by what they feel is a callous attitude toward an historically important swath of Chicago's urban fabric.

The two proposals also suggest a deeper unease in Chicago, and across the nation, about the difficulty of overcoming public indifference to midcentury modern architecture. "As someone once told me, it's old enough to depreciate, but it's not old enough to appreciate," said James Peters, president of Landmarks Illinois. Peters listed a number of other architecturally significant but low-profile works that were recently demolished to further his point, including three separate hospital buildings designed by Bertrand Goldberg and a piece of the Great Lakes Naval Base designed by SOM.

Apparently, little or no thought was given to saving these architecturally significant sites. Representatives from both Metra and Chicago 2016 deferred to SOM, both the designer of the station and the master-planner for the Olympic bid. "This is the footprint we were given," said Molly Sullivan, communications director for the city's Department of Community Development, about plans for the Reese campus. "This was the decision of our designers." SOM declined to comment.

On the Michael Reese campus, this means the demolition of 28 buildings, eight designed by Gropius, with signature ribbon windows and rectilinear brick massing, along with significant landscapes by Lester Collins, Hideo Sasaki, and Paul Novak. Many of the buildings have been abandoned for years, and the hospital, following its September bankruptcy, has begun stripping buildings for resale to help pay down its \$100 million debt. "There are original Herman Miller chairs, significant fixtures, and sculptures, all lost or vandalized," Peters said.

Critics suspect that the city needs to recoup the boom-time price it paid for the site, something that partial or wholesale preservation could compromise. To ensure a timely demolition—a contractor for the work was announced June 9—the city appears to be using the Olympics as a cudgel to forge ahead without due oversight.

"How can they even consider demolishing these important buildings before they know they've won the bid?" said Graham Balkany, founder of Gropius in Chicago Coalition, a group that is seeking to create a Bauhaus district around the campus.

Sullivan insists this is not the case: "There's clearly a difference of opinion on adaptive reuse. The timeline is, we need to be ready when the bid comes in, which means demolishing the Reese site so it is ready for redevelopment. It's a very strict timeline." She also chastised preservationists for suggesting the city was in any way misusing the Olympics to demolish an important site. "This is not a land grab," she said.

The city must also wait for a ruling from the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board this summer, which must sign off on the closure of any hospital. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency has indicated it may raise issues with the proposed demolition, but for now, it is withholding judgment.

As for the Mies building at IIT, the preservation agency was less charitable. Ruling that it lacked significant historic fabric—"It had integrity issues," Anthony Rubano, a project designer at the agency, told *AN*—Metra decided to demolish the building, which is used for storage. "We asked the IHPA to tell us whether or not we should proceed, and based on their experience, they saw no issue with it," said Michael Gillis, a Metra spokesman. The benefits of a new station not only for the school but also Cellular Field and burgeoning local development were seen to outweigh preservation.

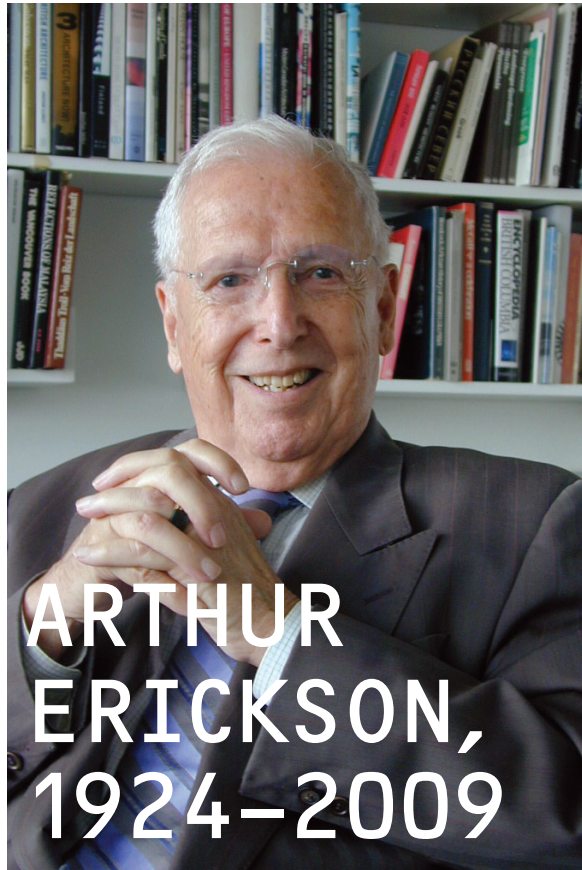
It is a decision that has incensed preservationists because the station will not even occupy the site, but instead rise behind it, with a plaza where the building now stands. There had been calls to reuse the building as a bike shed or bathrooms, but they fell on deaf ears. "As usual, they made the expedient decision, they took the easy way out," said Jonathan Fine, executive director for Preservation Chicago.

"Nobody gets it," Fine added. "They see simple lines and brick boxes. Because it's not dripping terra cotta, they figure, 'Why save it?' It's our job to educate the public so they understand why." **MC**



The Kaplan Pavilion at Michael Reese Hospital (1953-55).

GRAHAM BALKANY



COURTESY NICK MILKOVICH ARCHITECTS

Arthur Erickson died on May 20, 2009, a few weeks before his 85th birthday. He was Canada's greatest architect, our unofficial Architect Laureate.

For those who knew him, the modest house and garden where he lived so comfortably in his native Vancouver will always stand as the symbol of his legacy: five decades of extraordinary buildings that have transformed cities and landscapes across Canada and around the world.

Professional recognition of his work included the UIA's Auguste Perret Award; gold medals from the AIA, Canada, and France; countless design awards; and seven honorary doctorates, including one in 1975 from his alma mater McGill University, where he completed his architectural studies in 1950.

In the beginning, he wanted to be a painter; he recalled with warmth the soirées that he attended as a teenager at the Vancouver home of another legend, Canadian painter Lawren Harris. But one day, in the summer of 1946, he came across an article in *Fortune* magazine with the first color photographs of Frank Lloyd Wright's house and studio at Taliesin West, and he said, "If an architect can do this, I'm going to go into architecture."

From the first houses in the 1950s to projects currently underway in Vancouver, he

used a surprisingly simple palette of materials and formal geometries to celebrate the poetry of architecture and the city. His buildings are Vitruvian in spirit: well-crafted, intelligent and responsive in their planning and organization, and not merely beautiful but delightful. They engage site and program, weather and climate, culture and history, daylight, and the natural colors of materials in ways that connect them to their context with startling originality, intentionally dissolving conventional distinctions between architecture and engineering, building and landscape.

The purity and simplicity that mark so much of his work are linked to his love of nature, informed perhaps by his painter's eye and encounters with artists like Harris, and to his fascination with Asian and Aboriginal cultures. He often reminded his colleagues of the need to protect the simplicity of the idea from the over-complication that comes with design development. His own design process typically started with a sketch or a few words of vignette. Projects would evolve in the endless examination of alternatives expressed in the sketches and models—the models were crucial—that were prepared by the design teams and criticized thoughtfully in open dialogues. A patient listener, Arthur possessed an uncanny ability to find the right answer, usually

somewhere in between the options on the table.

The long list of his built works includes a number of stunning residences and iconic buildings such as Simon Fraser University, the University of Lethbridge and Macmillan Bloedel (with partner Geoffrey Massey); the UBC Museum of Anthropology; the Evergreen, designed as a mixed-use building at the water's edge in downtown Vancouver, now restored and designated a landmark; Roy Thompson Hall, Toronto; the Royal Bank of Canada, Ottawa; the Canadian Chancery in Washington, D.C.; the Tacoma Glass Museum, and many more.

One landmark project, the Robson Square and Law Courts Complex (1980) in Vancouver, is one of the finest examples of urban design in Canada. It is, in Erickson's own words, "a fragment of utopia," a term he used to describe the nature of a university campus—but doesn't every good building offer a glimpse of utopia?

Conceived as a celebration of art, law, and government and designed with a 60-foot-long model that took over the office as the scheme evolved, the three city blocks of Robson Square are an urban living room that defines the heart of downtown Vancouver. A beautifully crafted sequence of stairs and ramps ("stramps"), terraces, waterfalls, and pools—seamlessly integrated within a lush landscape designed by long-time friend and collaborator landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander—provides an unexpectedly civic context for a government center. It is an inventive and effective interpretation of a vision of justice that is accessible, transparent, and non-threatening—"a new attitude to the courts." Arthur once described this intention as "probably the most important aspect of my work: getting people to see things in a different light."

He was like his buildings—gentle and dignified, impeccable in manner and dress, eloquent and courageous. He was unique.

DAVID COVO IS AN ARCHITECT AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY. BARRY JOHNS, AN ARCHITECT AND TEACHER BASED IN EDMONTON, ALBERTA, WORKED IN ERICKSON'S OFFICE BETWEEN 1974 AND 1980.

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COURTESY ADRIAN SMITH + GORDON GILL ARCHITECTURE

When longtime Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) partner Adrian Smith left the famed firm's Chicago office in October 2006, he wasted little time starting his own practice. By November, Smith, along with fellow SOM colleagues Gordon Gill and Robert Forest, founded Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture (ASGG) on the 23rd floor of the Harris Bank Building, designed by SOM, on 111 West Monroe Street in downtown Chicago.

"A truly unique space for a city site," according to Smith, and one that meshed particularly well with the firm's own design philosophy, which focuses on high-performance, energy-efficient, sustainable architecture. Built in 1958 for the executive offices of Harris Bank, the space features two 1,000-square-foot interior courtyards (made possible because of its side-core air conditioning system) with working fountains and greenery, as well as ten-foot-high clear glass walls that successfully integrate the natural and built environments.

Embracing the existing floor plan and structure, including its interior stainless

steel columns and green marble surfacing, Smith and Gill transformed the former bank offices into an optimal work area centered around the two interior courtyards. With a firm approach that takes into consideration a building's orientation, daylighting, generation of wind power, solar absorption, and a site's geothermal properties, Smith told AN, "Our buildings need to be designed to reduce the amount of energy needed, to absorb as much natural energy around the building as possible, and to generate enough power to run the building." In the ASGG offices, Smith and Gill demonstrate this principle clearly by removing interior walls to allow natural light to pour into the space, increasing the building's energy efficiency, which is further improved by the use of dimmers and a radiant heating system, while the exterior areas are kept cool by overhangs that keep heat gain at a minimum. Courtyard doors open up into the interior space, providing natural ventilation and serving to reduce the floor's overall air conditioning load.

Designed to maximize daylight and city views in all areas, flexible work spaces

were established to create a fluid environment that can easily adapt to the changing needs of multidisciplinary teams of architects, interior designers, and urban planners. Sharp orthogonal lines and a primary red color palette pay aesthetic homage to 1960s modernism. Red paneling behind the sleek white workstations by Knoll and the ASGG-designed medium-density fiber reception desk with a high-gloss, red-painted finish dynamically contrast with the existing green marble walls of the building.

With more than 150 employees total, the firm recently acquired two floors in another building at 115 South LaSalle, within the SOM-designed complex. The two floors retain the same palette and furniture as the Monroe Street office, with slight modifications in color: The reception desk is silver and the Barcelona chairs are white. However, the space itself reflects more of a traditional central core office space, with a large 22-foot-by-5-foot conference room that can accommodate 50 people, for the needs of this rapidly expanding office.

DANIELLE RAGO

Clockwise from top left: One of two interior courtyards, conference room, studio workstations, reception area of 115 South LaSalle, and the conference room with courtyards on either side.

RESOURCES LIST:

- 1 Workstations:** Knoll, AutoStrada AS-4, www.knoll.com
- 2 Office Chairs:** Knoll, Chadwick Task Chair, www.knoll.com
- 3 Ceiling:** USG, HALCYON ClimaPlus, www.usg.com
- 4 Lighting:** Delray Lighting Incorporated, T5 Linear Fluorescent, www.delraylighting.com
- 5 Audio/Visual System:** King Systems LLC, www.kingsystemsllc.com
- 6 Custom Woodwork:** Imperial Woodworking, www.imperialwoodworking.com
- 7 Window Screens:** Lutron, Sivoia QS with the GRAFIK Eye system, www.lutron.com
- 8 Carpet Tiles:** Mohawk, The Field Modular, www.mohawkflooring.com
- 9 Cabinetry:** Corporate Concepts, www.corpconc.com

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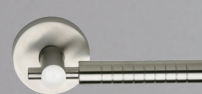
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 17, 2009

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS BUILD A SOFTBALL FIELD



COURTESY CORDISH CO.

OUTTA THE PARK

In St. Louis' new Busch Stadium, centerfield was purposely placed adjacent to a parcel intended for the sparkling Ballpark Village mixed-use development, created by Design Collective. But since demolition of the old Busch Stadium, Ballpark Village has been repeatedly delayed, and the parcel, located where a corner of the old Busch Stadium stood, has become a seven-block mud pit. However, as the 2009 All-Star Game, scheduled to be played in St. Louis in mid-July, has drawn closer, the Cardinals organization is finally breaking ground on the site. The project: a regulation softball field.

"The first two years of the ball park, the site looked

pretty bad," said Bill DeWitt III, president of the Cardinals. "It was just a hole in the ground, basically."

Developed by the Cordish Co. in conjunction with the owners of the St. Louis Cardinals, the \$600 million Ballpark Village is slated to create 325,000 square feet of office space; 250,000 square feet of retail space; and 1,200 parking spaces.

As the new red-brick Busch Stadium rose from 2004 to 2006, its footprint overlapped the old one so closely that walkways of the old ballpark were shorn off so work could continue. After the last bit of the stadium was hauled away, the downtown pit became a joke to locals.

Last fall, the team decided

to enhance the site. This involved removing pile caps, bringing in fill material, grading, and planting grass. Some parking was also added.

"This spring, as we started contemplating the needs of the All-Star Game, one of the things the game required was a large, open space for the giant gala tent," said DeWitt. "It became the perfect spot. Obviously, it's a great location and there are opportunities to tie in some youth stuff."

It's also a project that allows flexibility to start work on the big project when the financing is in place, explained Chase Martin, Cordish's development director for Ballpark Village. He said they are waiting for state approval of subsidies, after which they will sell the needed bonds. He expects action around the end of the summer. "We'll still build," he said. "We'll build all seven blocks."

Ballpark Village's design is meant to complement the baseball stadium. "The first part is the ballpark, which in some ways isn't complete until we get Ballpark Village done. Until then, it's just open space and views of the downtown skyline," DeWitt said. "We think it could be much better with a giant mixed-use project." **MM**

DESIGN PROFESSIONALS RUSH FOR ACCREDITATION BEFORE EXAM STANDARDS ARE RAISED

LEED STAMPEDE

When Harris Ford, a designer at Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects in New Haven, Connecticut, registered for the LEED exam this spring, he was not alone. So many other would-be test takers were also trying to sign up on March 31—the last day to test under the old system, LEED version 2.2—that they crashed the registration website. "I beat the rush by about 48 hours," Ford said. "At least 25 people in the office registered. Even the associates and partners were considering it."

The stream of professionals looking to become LEED-accredited has become a flood, as a major overhaul of the exam, combined with a tough economy and buzz about "green-collar" jobs, has made getting the credential seem increasingly necessary. "Approximately 109,000 people registered for the test between March and June," said Beth Holst, vice president of credentialing at the Green

Building Certification Institute, which administers the exam. "It's unprecedented. Last year we tested 50,000 people total. This year, we're testing 50,000 in the month of June alone."

The shift to LEED version 3.0 is a major overhaul that includes changes to the rating system, online project management tools, and the professional accreditation system. That system is now tiered, with three new credentials aimed at different segments of the design and building community. The middle tier approximates the current LEED AP credential but adds additional requirements: a second, specialty exam in one of the five rating systems; experience on an actual LEED project; and continuing education courses.

The changes are meant to address the shortcomings of the current exam, which many argue is a better measure of memorization skills than green design knowledge. "The test

is so rote; I wish it were more concept-based," said Ford. However, he also conceded that the desire to avoid the new, more onerous requirements was a factor in his decision to get accredited. "It seemed like the new test would be more difficult and more involved," he admitted. "The motivation was to take the easier test now."

Less clear is whether LEED accreditation will be a boon for professionals in the job market. "In a down economy, people try to add something extra to their resume," Holst said. "LEED is that 'extra,' not just for architects and engineers, but also for people in real estate, finance, accounting, law, and a host of other industries." But as LEED accreditation becomes ubiquitous, the credential won't help candidates stand out from the crowd. It will, however, have a more far-reaching effect by making green building the new "normal." And that has been the goal of LEED's creators, the U.S. Green Building Council, from the start.

GABRIELLE BRAINARD

CHICAGO'S OLYMPIC BID EMPHASIZES PRACTICALITY OVER DESIGN



COURTESY CHICAGO 2016

SPORT CITY

While many know that architect and planner Daniel Burnham made no little plans, fewer may realize that his Plan of Chicago was done *pro bono*. So it should be no surprise that virtually all of the architectural drawings done thus far for Chicago's bid for the 2016 Olympics have also been done *pro bono* and with no guarantee that the volunteers will get the work if Chicago gets the nod, according to Zurich Esposito, the AIA's Chicago chapter executive vice president. Chicago is competing against Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, and Madrid.

Two years ago, two separate teams rendered preliminary sketches for the event's biggest architectural set pieces, the Olympic Stadium and Olympic Village. The stadium, proposed for Washington Park on Chicago's South Side, is nowhere near as dramatic as the Calatrava redo of Athens' existing stadium for the 2004 Olympics, to say nothing of the iconic National Stadium in Beijing by Herzog and de Meuron.

The asymmetrical design for the proposed Chicago Olympic Stadium is only hinted at in the city's official bid package to the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The drawings are by the Ben Wood Studio Shanghai and Chicago's Goettsch Partners, both of whom also collaborated on the masterplan for the 2003 renovation of Chicago's Soldier Field. But neither has a lock on any of Chicago's Olympic venues. Herzog and de Meuron didn't get the Beijing project until well after that city was chosen by the IOC to host the 2008 Olympics.

Chicago's current stadium concept is to give it a sculpted exterior of fiber or vinyl. But what's most exciting about the 80,000-seat structure is that it largely disappears after the Olympics end, leaving a small terraced amphitheater seating fewer than 3,500. Besides the need to save money in a country that doesn't nationally underwrite the Olympics as China did (reportedly to the tune of some \$40 billion), the Chicago 2016 Committee also confronts skeptical to irate Washington Park neighbors who want the park to remain an "open meadow," as originally conceived in 1871 by its designer, Frederick Law Olmsted.

Bid backers hope that this novel plan will alleviate neighborhood opposition and not deter the IOC from awarding the games to

Chicago. It was the political impasse concerning the location of the Olympic Stadium that many believe led the IOC to nix New York's bid for the 2012 Games in favor of London.

Assuming that the IOC takes notice of the world's current economic crisis, it should be especially interested in the current plan to recycle materials from Chicago's dismantled stadium so that they might be repurposed elsewhere for university or high school stadia, or even future Olympic games, according to Goettsch partner Joe Dolinar.

Plans for the Olympic Village are both further along and more difficult to access. Private developers have long eyed the site of the failing Michael Reese Hospital along Chicago's South Lake Shore Drive as the city's next big housing development. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Ross Wimer and Phil Enquist led the way in developing a masterplan for the site as the Olympic Village, and the city has acquired the property. Notoriously close-mouthed, spokespeople at SOM would not comment.

Some critics are concerned that a small coterie of architects have been involved in the process and that the bid, overall, lacks architectural ambition. Local architects Stanley Tigerman and Jeanne Gang were among the select few who worked with SOM on "visioning" how the proposed mixed-use complex could best accommodate the Games.

While the need for formal designs is still far off, plenty of design thinking is well underway. "There's not a lot of architectural detail in our formal bid," said Chicago 2016 spokesman Patrick Sandusky, "because it's largely a response to the IOC's very specific RFP." Much of the three-volume bid involves financial, geographical, and environmental data, as well as plans for legacy uses for the venues.

"One of the biggest tasks was finding the sites for the venues, making sure the city could represent to the IOC that we had enough land, and that the Games would be held in a relatively compact area of the city, with excellent transportation among the venues and the Village. We even plan for athletes to be able to walk from the Village to some of their competition sites," said Gang.

Now, all await October 2, when the IOC will announce the winner. **JOEL HENNING**

CELEBRATING BURNHAM continued from front page Pritzker Bandshell from June 19 to October 31. They are funded by \$1 million in private donations; by comparison, Kapoor's famous sculpture cost \$23 million. The new pavilions are intended to be an attention-grabbing focus for the overall centennial celebration, which lasts all year and includes concerts, exhibitions, and initiatives to add even more open space to the city.

Both pavilions sit on a footprint of roughly 40 by 50 feet, but the two firms translate Burnham's legacy into different forms. Hadid's design is being assembled off-site, and consists of a tensile fabric skin stretched over an aluminum frame, creating a tent-like structure visitors can enter. A film projected onto its inner surface will intersperse scenes of Chicago's transformation with Chicagoans talking about what future changes they would like to see in their city.

Upon realizing that their pavilion site was perfectly aligned with one of Burnham's diagonal boulevards, the Hadid team adopted that axis as a central design element. "We introduced a series of louvers that are all in the direction of this diagonal," said project architect Thomas Vietzke from London. "The Burnham plan is inscribed in our structure... directly translated into its structural ribs."

UNStudio's pavilion is being constructed on-site, with a skeleton of steel and a skin of plywood painted in multiple coats of glossy white paint to reflect its surroundings. Its flat roof leads downward into three curving supports that rest on a platform. LED fixtures will respond to visitors' presence on the platform at night, lighting up and changing the pavilion's colors as people enter and exit.

The shape of the UNStudio pavilion's roof is a reference to Chicago's transformation, said the firm's co-founder Ben van Berkel in a phone interview from his Amsterdam office. Just as the Burnham plan softened the city's strict grid with airy boulevards and greenery, the pavilion's rectangular roof is

softened by the curves and folds within its frame. Those folds also create three apertures that bracket views of Chicago's iconic architecture. "At the end of Millennium Park, there's a beautiful collection of skyscrapers," said van Berkel, "and if you stand in the pavilion you can look through and see them."

The organization coordinating the celebration, the Burnham Plan Centennial (BPC), praised the two firms' "bold" and "visionary" designs as being in the spirit of Burnham himself, who is most famously quoted as saying, "Make no small plans." Despite some grumbling from the public that a Chicago-oriented celebration should feature Chicago-based architects, the BPC's executive director, Emily Harris, explained that they had intentionally sought out architects who had never designed in the city before: "The idea was to get a fresh perspective," she said.

Both pavilions will be dismantled after October, but may yet see new life. With its fabric skin and lightweight aluminum frame, Hadid's pavilion can be stored and reassembled with relative ease; the BPC hopes to auction it off so that it can be installed in another location. And UNStudio has hired a "deconstruction contractor" who will both take apart the pavilion and distribute the resulting fragments to Chicago artists for incorporation in their work.

JULIA GALEF



AT DEADLINE

GEHRY'D AWAY

After months of speculation, Frank Gehry has finally been removed as lead designer of the new Nets Arena at Forest City Ratner's Atlantic Yards project. On June 4, the developer announced that Kansas City-based Ellerbe Becket would replace the Santa Monica architect, and that Gehry Partners would be reduced to the role of master planner. A spokesperson for Ratner suggested in an interview that it is "not impossible" that Gehry might still design one of the 16 apartment or office towers he proposed for the 22-acre site, though that is looking increasingly unlikely. Meanwhile, on June 1, Forest City Ratner announced it would finish Gehry's 76-story Beekman Tower, after toying with the idea of capping it at 40 stories.

DETROIT DE-CENTRALIZED

Michigan legislators are in the midst of a death match over McKim, Mead & White's iconic Michigan Central Station. The station and its soaring office tower have lain vacant for two decades, decaying and vandalized, becoming a building loved by preservationists but loathed by locals for the stigma it is perceived to cast on downtrodden Detroit. In late April, the city council voted for an emergency demolition, saying the building was unsafe and threatening property values. A group of local state senators fought back a month later, calling for its preservation, though it will likely take a decision in court to decide the building's fate. The current owner had hoped to turn it into a casino, but is now wooing the General Services Administration, which is seeking 50,000 square feet in the city.

LANDMARK LIFELINE

After the Illinois Appellate Court declared Chicago's 41-year-old landmarks law unconstitutionally vague in January, local preservation groups hoped the state supreme court would reverse the decision. Instead, on May 28, the state's highest court declined to hear the case, sending it back to the lower court, where a judge is expected to uphold the prior decision. The case could lead to the decimation of landmarks laws nationwide, as many are based on similar criteria. Indeed, developers in Seattle and elsewhere have already begun using the January decision to challenge other local laws.

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Renzo Piano's new addition to the Art Institute of Chicago is a monument to one of the country's great art collections and a city's striving for design excellence.
By Edward Lifson



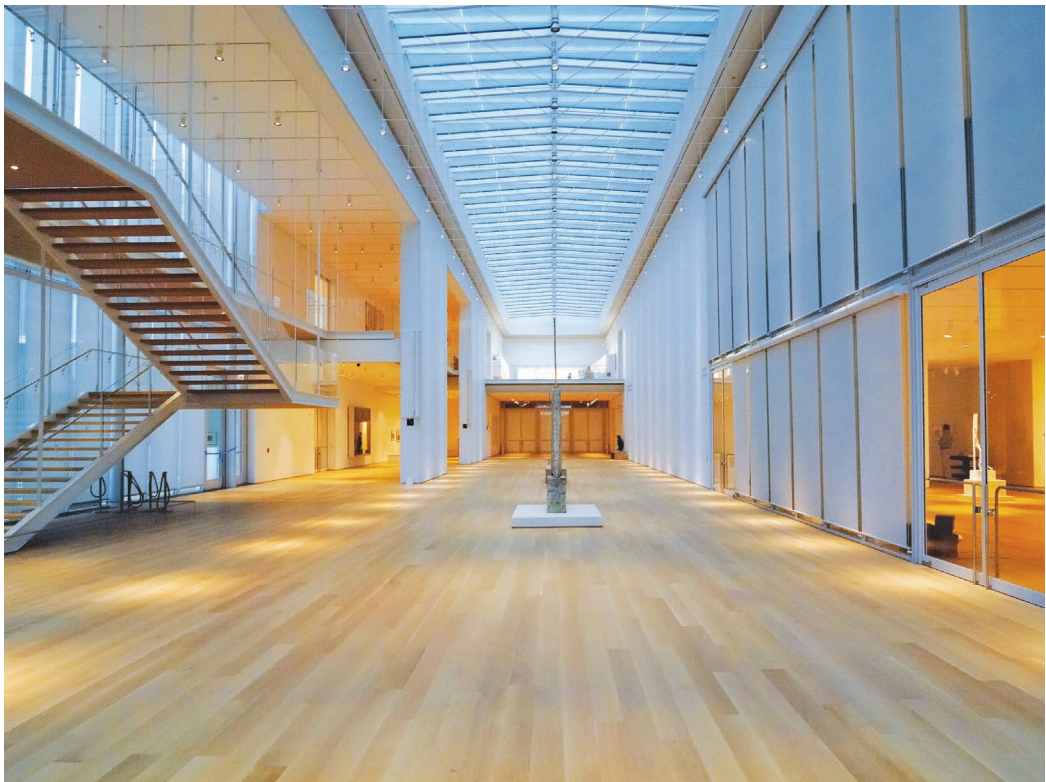
DAVE JORDANO



CHARLES G. YOUNG, INTERACTIVE DESIGN ARCHITECTS

Previous:
The Modern Wing offers views of the city, Millennium Park, and Gerhard Richter's *Woman Descending the Stair* (1965).
Top:
The addition as seen from the Lurie Garden in Millennium Park.

Bottom:
A large multipurpose space, Griffin Court, forms a north-south spine in the wing that is filled with natural daylight.



Even if you've been to every Renzo Piano-designed museum of the last ten years, you may be surprised at how much there is to admire in his new Modern Wing at the Art Institute of Chicago. Though not without flaws, the addition is Piano's best museum in America since the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas of 2003, and the best building in downtown Chicago since the John Hancock opened in 1970.

The Modern Wing, like the soaring Hancock, shows Chicago's ambition. Conceived more than ten years ago, it ended up costing \$294 million, and is likely to be the last great museum addition of its kind in America for some time. Its 264,000 square feet enlarge the Art Institute by a third and make it the second largest art museum in the United States. Chicago, no longer really even the "Second City," is competing with New York again—at least in its mind, and that's a good thing.

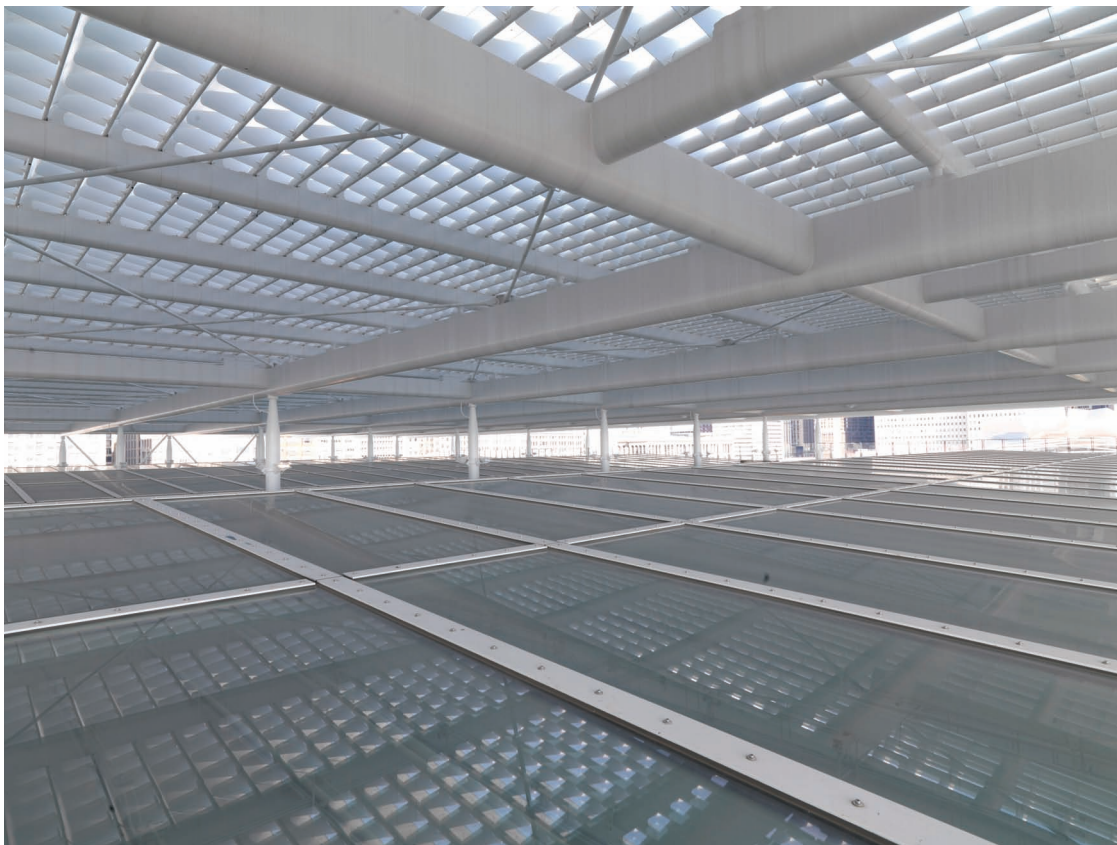
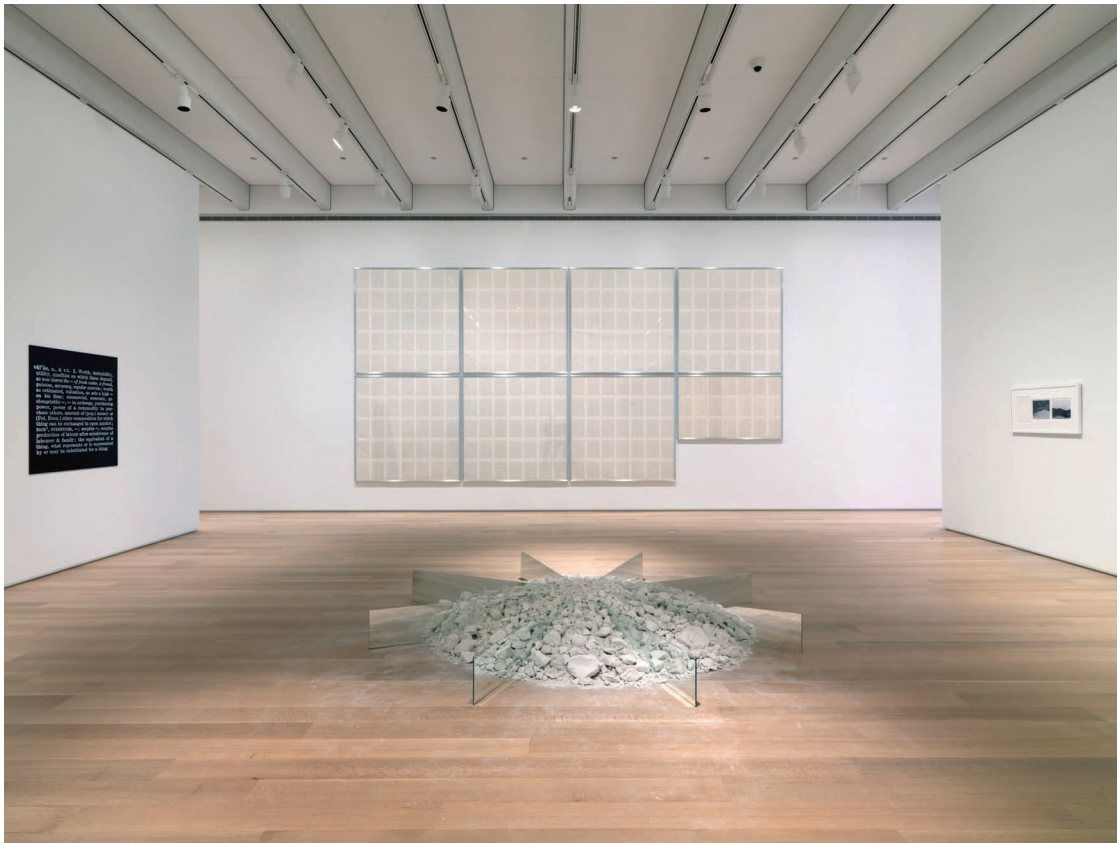
The addition allows the Art

Institute to show off its encyclopedic collection, which includes its modern and contemporary art, such pieces as a suite of color panels by Gerhard Richter; two rooms for the gown, tissue box, and other odd objects and wallpapers by Robert Gober; and a gallery for the newly-acquired *Hinoki* by Charles Ray, a trunk of an oak tree on its side, hand-carved out of cypress. You can no longer think of the institute as a limestone building full of French Impressionist works. The wing is a game-changer.

Ten years ago, the Art Institute hired Pritzker Prize-winner Renzo Piano to design a smaller addition on the south side of the building. When Mayor Daley's plans for Millennium Park, which was to cover over rail yards and parking lots downtown, grew to become Chicago's most important project since the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, the Art Institute shifted its new addition to the north to face it. Accordingly, the Modern

PIANO PIECES

For the Modern Wing, the design team devised uncommon mechanical and structural systems to support the architect's aesthetic goals of pristine lightness and transparency. By Aaron Seward



DAVE JORDANO

Top: The loft-like spareness of the galleries was achieved in part by housing all mechanicals in six-foot-nine-inch-thick walls, leaving the ceilings relatively unencumbered.

Bottom: Piano's daylight-diffusing device, the flying carpet, is composed of east-west running aluminum blades and north-south running aluminum fins, all welded to a grid of steel.

Since its first permanent structure, the Allerton Building, opened in 1893—and through each of its subsequent expansions—the Art Institute of Chicago has displayed a strong dedication to exhibiting its collection under diffused natural light. The institution's latest addition, the 264,000-square-foot Modern Wing designed by Renzo Piano Building Workshop, is perhaps the most thorough exploration of that commitment yet. While every previous structure in the complex—from the original Beaux Arts palace to the 1988 Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Building—has been constructed in limestone, Piano's contribution is an ode to steel and glass, serving as a link to the city's legacy of modernist highrises as well as an embodiment of ethereal lightness.

To achieve this razor-thinness and transparency, the design team from Piano's office, along with associate architect Interactive Design and engineers at Arup London, relied on a composite structure containing both reinforced concrete and steel sections. The eastern pavilion of the building that houses an education center and galleries is the most interestingly configured. The first two floors are framed in a combination of poured-in-place concrete and pre-cast concrete T-sections, which create 54-foot clear spans for the galleries. The choice of this material also allowed extremely narrow floor profiles, which were trimmed even further by omitting any horizontal HVAC ducting within the space. All of the ventilation flues, as well as the concrete T-sections, were run vertically within a series of north-to-south running double walls, each measuring six-feet-nine-inches thick. Air is moved through slim vents running at the tops of the walls, and the only mechanicals left to clutter the ceiling were the sprinkler and smoke detection systems. Nonetheless, the building's spandrels were kept to an attenuated ten inches.

From the third floor to the roof, steel takes over for a smooth transition to Piano's daylight-diffusing system, the "flying carpet." Tapered tubular columns, on average 14 inches in diameter, rise from the concrete floor to meet, in exposed pinned connections, the grid of aluminum and glass that shelters the building. The flying carpet is composed of pre-mounted cassettes of aluminum blades running east and west. Aluminum "dorsal fins" run perpendicular to the blades at greater intervals to maintain the diffusion of light throughout the day. The grouping of blades was also varied depending on what space they cover. Above the modern collection galleries, the blades are grouped more closely to better break up the light, an effect that is doubled by a layer of vellum that stretches across the top of the gallery. Above Griffin Court, the blades were spaced to allow greater light into this public gathering space.

The building also features two double-glass curtain walls on the north and south facades. Featuring two-and-a-half-foot-deep cavities, these walls increase the wing's insulation values while maintaining its transparency. Again, thinness was key. The stick-built system was hung from above rather than supported from below, because when a structure is in tension, the profiles of its framing members can be kept slimmer than when it's in compression. Even so, since some of the spans supporting the mullions reach as much as 35 feet, the fabricator, Gartner, specified both steel and aluminum members. The panels of glass themselves—laminated, low-iron units with UV filtering properties and high color-retention films—are also slim, as little as two-feet-three-inches wide by 19 feet long. All of the glass had to be fired in Europe, as there are no domestic kilns capable of producing such sizes.

AARON SEWARD IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR AT AN.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 17, 2009



DAVE JORDANO

The third floor galleries, devoted to the Institute's modern collection, are almost entirely daylit.

Wing grew in scope and cost.

Millennium Park, of course, features Frank Gehry's band shell, waves of undulating stainless steel that reflect light and give the city pure joy. Piano said at the time that his building would engage in a "dialogue" with Gehry's work, and it has. Gehry's curving pavilion is directly framed by Piano's rectilinear gallery windows; outside, Gehry's steel reflects in the Modern Wing's glass.

At the wing's inception, an Art Institute trustee told me, "We'll have to spend a lot of money on details; but if we spend the money, I know we'll get a masterwork." And so they did. The economic downturn after 9/11 didn't stop the project. Having been called upon to fund Millennium Park, wealthy Chicagoans then ponied up for the museum so that for the first time in far too long, a grand civic monument could be properly conceived and executed in their city.

The detailing throughout the

wing is at the highest level. From handrails to wooden floors to ventilation systems, the master architect got much of what he asked for.

The main sensation in the Modern Wing is its light. Piano's system of louvers on the roof block the harsh southern light, admitting the calmer northern light, filtering it and diffusing it through vellum. The effect comes as close to perfection here as he has ever achieved, creating spaces that are alive yet serene. Looking up, the white aluminum blades are elegant and less fussy than Piano's recent work in Los Angeles.

Moving the wing to the north side also allowed Piano to open that entire facade with floor-to-ceiling glass. This gives stunningly sensuous views of Millennium Park across the street, while the double-layer glass blocks the noise of the city. When you see people walking in the gardens across the way, it's as if Piano has taken a masterpiece of the Art Institute—say, Seurat's

A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—and brought it to life. Other works like Matisse's large *Bathers by a River* gain in juxtaposition with the colorful gardens and water elements of the park outside. Constantin Brancusi's reflective forms by the window engage with Anish Kapoor's shiny, bean-shaped *Cloud Gate* outside, one of the great crowd-pleasing pieces of public art in the park. The south wall overlooking a new garden is also glass, covered with integrated thin scrims when it's not overcast.

All Renzo Piano museum wings are similar but are not created equal. One may wonder why Chicago did so well. Years ago, I walked through the New National Gallery in Berlin with Piano. He was in awe of the place. It has minimal amounts of glass, steel, and stone, but is elegant, refined, and uplifting to the spirit. It was designed, of course, by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, a German living in Chicago.

Piano brings some of that back to the Windy City. His exterior is boxy, glassy, and symmetrical like a temple, in the same way that Mies' was. His slender, white-steel, tapering columns hold up a wafer-like flat white roof that extends out over the galleries; Piano calls it a "flying carpet," and it's part of his renowned system of getting natural light into galleries. The roof is Miesian, yet its horizontal thrust also recalls local hero Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie style. The platonic cube of the main galleries, with ornament on the side, reminds one of Louis Sullivan's Midwest banks. Like those, this is a jewel box that contains great treasure.

Piano deftly wove his building into Chicago's history: He added parallel planes of Indiana limestone walls to complement the Art Institute's beloved 1893 Beaux Arts building. Piano's flat facade contains Millennium Park, and his transparent walls allow the grand urban square to transition gracefully from nature and pleasure to city and culture.

Yet not all is right at the Modern Wing. While the main building has a satisfying cube shape, other volumes have been messily added to the east side. First comes the nave-like entrance court, and then another is tacked onto that for more galleries and the restaurant. These feel arbitrary.

Moreover, Piano's museum gives almost no views of Lake Michigan. Windows or a terrace on the east side would have offered spectacular views of Grant Park and the lake.

The Modern Wing is a large intrusion into the "sacred" lake-front parks of Chicago; all the more reason to give back new lake views.

A 620-foot-long pedestrian bridge designed by Piano also mars the project. It blocks the facade, also seems tacked on, and is not well resolved where it meets the adjacent park. The bridge would not be necessary if city authorities had seen the wisdom of closing Monroe Street between the park and the museum, which would also help usher families into the museum.

Piano's bridge again engages in a dialogue with Gehry, whose bridge in Millennium Park winds left and right like a river. Piano's is a straight shot up from the park to a third floor sculpture terrace, free to the public, another stroke of civic generosity.

The Art Institute still straddles working train tracks. Part of Piano's design was to open windows in the existing hall connecting the two parts. He wanted even larger windows, which would have been an improvement.

The museum is rightfully proud of its dignified yet intimate Beaux Arts entrance on Michigan Avenue, which makes Chicagoans feel like they're going home when they go in, and that makes them feel like part-owners of the collection. Still, many will take Piano's entrance to the north, which has a more commercial feel. It's a large space: light-filled, double height, mall-like. Will this change the connection that the next generation feels to the place? Thankfully, the gift shop and cafe in this arcade are not front and foremost.

The Art Institute is seeking LEED Silver certification for the Modern Wing. For a city and a mayor that crow about being the "greenest" in America, a higher level of sustainability could have been achieved.

In the main, though, the Modern Wing is a triumph, with a civilizing presence. Piano has resolved the tension between what he calls a "beautiful fragility" and the need for strength. Power brokers in Chicago felt the city deserved an example of the world's best contemporary architecture, and they got one.

EDWARD LIFSON IS AN ARCHITECTURE CRITIC AND A FELLOW AT THE HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

READ LIFSON'S INTERVIEW WITH RENZO PIANO ABOUT THE NEW WING AT WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM/LIFSON.

FEATURE
25



CHARLES G. YOUNG, INTERACTIVE DESIGN ARCHITECTS



JAMES ISKA, AIC

Top:
A pedestrian bridge connects the wing to Millennium Park and allows park visitors free access to a rooftop sculpture court and cafe.

Bottom:
The flying carpet creates a dramatic horizontal element on the skyline while allowing daylight—and cutting energy usage—in the museum.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 17, 2009

The contract design market is down but far from out. We survey the economic picture and offer our picks to look out for at this year's NeoCon World's Trade Fair.

Compiled by Alan G. Brake and Danielle Rago

NEOCON PREVIEW

The commercial furnishing and finishes industries have not been immune to the economic downturn, but most companies have plans that anticipate contract market fluctuations, according to Mark Falanga, a senior vice president at Merchandise Mart Properties (MMP), the company which produces NeoCon. "The companies that plan ahead and invest in innovation are the ones that are best positioned to benefit when things turn around," he said.

According to the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA), \$11.16 billion were spent on contract furnishing in 2008. Estimates for 2009 predict that spending will fall to approximately \$9 billion. "There's still a large market out there. There's still business being done," Falanga said. BIFMA indicates a large uptick in federal spending on furnishings, which they estimate will lessen what would have been an even larger decline. Companies with products approved by the General Services Administration will especially benefit from this spending.

Attendance numbers at NeoCon are also expected to be down by 20 percent, but MMP is working to bridge some of that difference by increasing student attendance and offering networking opportunities for designers. They estimate that the total number of firms who attend the show will match last year, even as firms send fewer employees. "If you're in the design business, you have to be aware of the new products. It gives you a competitive advantage in the marketplace," he said. "There's still a lot of optimism in the industry." **AGB**



2



1



3



1 Casper Allermuir

A distinctive monoshell stacking chair available on a wire skid base, four-legged frame, or beam, Casper is part of Allermuir's new occasional chair collection. Ideal for both corporate and commercial markets, the chair is available in a variety of shades including red, beige, yellow, green, white, and blue.
www.allermuir.com

2 Intent Furniture Herman Miller

Herman Miller's latest office furniture system, Intent Furniture, is a flexible workstation designed by JRuiter + Studio. With the ability to be configured from a basic single- or double-pedestal desk to a full caseload solution with desks, returns, credenzas, and storage, this furniture system suits a maximum variety of office settings.
www.hermanmiller.com

3 Genya Sedia Systems

Sedia Systems' new Genya auditorium chair is a tip-up seat with arms that fold into a flat, streamlined surface. A cushioned gas device retracts the arms and seat when unoccupied, and the chairs can be used on flat-, sloped-, or tiered-floored venues. Genya can be finished in leather or fabric upholstery, with the backrest panel in leather, marble, or wood.
www.sediasystems.com

4 Picknik JANUS et Cie

JANUS et Cie's Picknik is an integrated bench and table constructed from a single plate of thick aluminum and molded into a cantilevered design. Suitable for indoors as well as outdoors, it comes in a variety of colored, powder-coated finishes.
www.janusetcie.com

5 Jaks Allermuir

Taking soft seating to a whole new level, contemporary furniture manufacturer Allermuir launched Jaks, a colorful and playful seating system designed by John Coleman. Bold and graphic in appearance, Jaks is a cross shape that can work alone or with other shapes interlocked to form a modular seating system.
www.allermuir.com

6 Elitra Chair Sedia Systems

Ergonomically designed by Italian architects Lucci & Orlandini, the Elitra Chair by Sedia Systems provides maximum comfort as well as good design. Chairs easily adapt to different positions through an advanced system of elastic nylon panels that allows for synchronized movement of the seat and backrest.
www.sediasystems.com



4



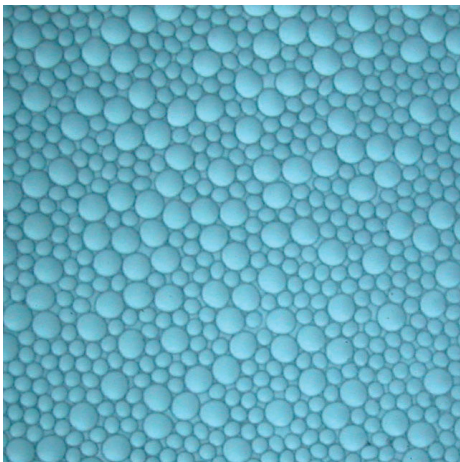
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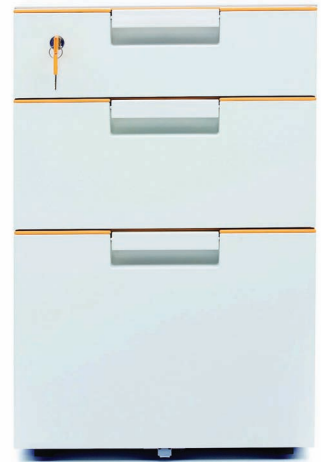
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8



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10



11



12

7 nesso
Steelcase

With the proven flexibility of access flooring and the visual appeal of high-end tile, Steelcase's new access floor system, nesso, allows designers to create more connected and harder working spaces while maintaining a polished look and feel.
www.steelcase.com

8 Bonded Series
Panelite

In Panelite's newest panels, the Bonded Series, PETG, polycarbonate, or acrylic facings are bonded to a tubular polycarbonate core using a UV-stabilized liquid adhesive to create a directionally transparent panel with clear viewing angles. In a wide range of colors and two different finishes—transparent or satin—the Bonded Series can be customized in diameter.
www.e-panelite.com

9 Pick-up Strips Light
Capri cork

Part of Capri cork's Mediterra Cork Collection, Pick-up Strips Light is one of the newest cork patterns to be added to the line of eco-friendly flooring. Composed of thin strips of natural, durable, renewable-resource materials, Capri cork is a versatile product that contributes to LEED credits.
www.capricork.com

10 Database Pedestal
Artland

Chinese-based office furniture retailer Artland's Database Pedestal combines smart design with high technical performance. Made of 108 standard parts with the ability to auto-lock and unlock, the pedestal is constructed of welded steel bars, insuring strength and durability.
www.artland.cn

11 BA Table
Itoki Design

Japanese contract furniture company Itoki Design's BA Table is a sleek and simple side table made from powder-coated, bent steel. Available in a number of color configurations including black/white, black/chrome, white/chrome, red, and green, the top is offered in aluminum or wood.
www.itokidesign.com

12 ACE
Vitra

Designed by Italian architect Antonio Citterio, Vitra's ACE workstation is an expansion of his 2008 rounded workdesk, with a new sideboard communicating relaxed elegance. Made of a solid-polymer-bonded mineral material and elegant, Y-shaped polished-aluminum legs, ACE radiates a sense of lightness and transparency.
www.vitra.com

BUCKMINSTER FULLER

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EXTENDED THROUGH JULY 5

**Museum of
Contemporary
Art**

mcachicago.org

CHICAGO

This exhibition is organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, in association with the Department of Special Collections of the Stanford University Libraries.

Major support is provided by the Henry Luce Foundation, the National Committee of the Whitney Museum of American Art in honor of Linda Pace, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the Atwater Kent Foundation, and The Solow Art and Architecture Foundation.

Support for the Chicago presentation is generously provided by Helen and Sam Zell, Mary Ittelson and Rick Tuttle, the Terra Foundation for American Art, Richard A. Lenon, Sylvia Neil and Daniel Fischel, Helmut and Deborah Jahn, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, The Acorn Foundation, Brian Herbstritt, Judith Neisser, and the Lillian H. Florsheim Foundation.

TERRA
FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART



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the Museum of
Contemporary Art

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JUNE

WEDNESDAY 17

LECTURES

Gertrude Lempp Kerbis, Karen Carter, Zurich Esposito
AIA Chicago Lifetime Achievement: Gertrude Kerbis
12:15 p.m.
The John Buck Company
Lecture Hall Gallery
224 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.architecture.org

Donald L. Miller
Daniel Burnham, Urban Visionary
6:00 p.m.
Chicago Architecture Foundation
The John Buck Company
Lecture Hall Gallery
224 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.architecture.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Water
The Field Museum
1400 South Lake Shore Dr., Chicago
www.fieldmuseum.org

TRADE SHOW
NeoCon 2009
8:00 a.m.
The Merchandise Mart
222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago
www.neocon.com

THURSDAY 18

LECTURES

Arthur Miller
Bennett in the Shadow of Burnham
12:15 pm
Chicago Cultural Center
78 East Washington St., Chicago
www.landmarks.org

Jean-Christophe Ballot, Chris Boicos
Paris—Chicago: The Photography of Jean-Christophe Ballot
6:00 p.m.
Alliance Française
54 West Chicago Ave., Chicago
www.luc.edu/luma/

Sarah Fayen
Charles Rohlf, The Aesthetic Movement, and the Roots of his Artistic Furniture
7:00 p.m.
Second Presbyterian Church
1936 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.glessnerhouse.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
2700
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Rymer Gallery
280 South Columbus Drive, Chicago
www.saic.edu

FRIDAY 19
SYMPOSIUM
What's Modern about American Art, 1900–1930
Through June 20
Chicago Cultural Center
78 East Washington St., Chicago
egov.cityofchicago.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Michelle "Mike" Ochonicky: A Retrospective
Third Degree Gallery
5200 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis
www.stonehollowstudio.com

RED, Group Exhibition
33 Collective Gallery
1029 West 35th St., Chicago
www.33collective.com

EVENT

The Burnham Pavilion in Millennium Park
Millennium Park, Chase Promenade South
www.millenniumpark.org
burnhamplan100.uchicago.edu

SATURDAY 20

LECTURE

Marty Gradolf
Cultural Heroes
12:00 p.m.
Eiteljorg Museum
500 W. Washington St., Indianapolis
www.eiteljorg.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

FAST X 3
4568 Manchester Ave., St. Louis
www.whiteflagprojects.org

EVENT

Midsummer Celebration
Erlander Home Museum
Swedish Historical Society of Rockford
404 South 3rd St., Rockford
www.swedishhistorical.org

WITH THE KIDS

Burnham Week: Building the City
10:00 a.m.
Millennium Park
Chase Promenade North, Chicago
www.millenniumpark.org

SUNDAY 21

SYMPOSIUM

Calder Symposium: La Grande Vitesse
2:00 p.m.
Grand Rapids Art Museum
101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids

MONDAY 22

EVENT

Paris by the Lake: A gala celebrating Rodin: In His Own Words—Selections from the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation and Paris—Chicago: The Photography of Jean-Christophe Ballot
6:30 p.m.
Loyola University
Museum of Art
51 East Pearson St., Chicago
www.luc.edu/luma

TUESDAY 23

EXHIBITION OPENING

The Soul of Bronzeville: The Regal, Club DeLisa, and The Blues
740 East 56th Pl., Chicago
www.dusablemuseum.org

EVENT

theWit Hotel Tour and Reception
5:30 p.m.
theWit Hotel
201 North State St., Chicago
www.architecture.org

WEDNESDAY 24

LECTURE

Grahm Balkany
Walter Gropius in Chicago: The Forgotten Legacy
12:15 p.m.
The John Buck Company
Lecture Hall Gallery
224 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.architecture.org

THURSDAY 25

LECTURES

Lau Chipang
The Big World: Recent Art from China
12:15 p.m.
Chicago Cultural Center
78 East Washington St., Exhibit Hall, Chicago
www.cityofchicago.org

Jonathan Weinberg
Implicitly Homosexual: George Tooker and Queer Communities in Modern American Art
7:00 p.m.
Columbus Museum of Art
480 East Broad St., Columbus
www.columbusmuseum.org

EVENT

re:work Chicago – A Workshop Designed to Help Reposition Careers & Restore Optimism
8:30 a.m.
Mohawk Industries Inc.
222 Merchandise Mart, Chicago
www.themohawkgroup.com

FRIDAY 26

SYMPOSIUM

Gretchen Minnehar
Architecture's Influence on the Arts
7:00 p.m.
Grand Rapids Art Museum
101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids
www.artmuseumgr.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Beyond Golden Clouds: Japanese Screens from the Art Institute of Chicago and the St. Louis Art Museum
The Art Institute of Chicago, Regenstein Hall
111 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.artic.edu/aic/

TRADE SHOW

Go Green Expo
Through June 28
Cobb Galleria Centre
Two Galleria Pkwy., Atlanta
www.gogreenexpo.com

SATURDAY 27

EVENTS

Summer Open House & Resident Artists' Talk
Lillstreet Art Center
4401 North Ravenswood Ave., Chicago
www.lillstreet.com

Tryon Farm: A Unique Conservation Community in LaPorte County, Indiana
10:30 a.m.
Tryon Farm
1500 Tryon Road, Michigan City, IN
www.architecture.org

JULY

WEDNESDAY 1

LECTURE

Andy Pierce
Uptown: Portrait of a Place
12:15 p.m.
The John Buck Company
Lecture Hall Gallery
224 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.architecture.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

The Front Room: Sam Moyer, Lesley Vance, Stan VanDerBeek
Contemporary Art Museum
St. Louis
3750 Washington Blvd., St. Louis
www.contemporarystl.org

THURSDAY 2

EXHIBITION OPENING

Tom Torluemke
After-Glow
Chicago Cultural Center, Michigan Ave. Galleries
78 East Washington St., Chicago
egov.cityofchicago.org

EVENT

The Exchange
6:00 p.m.
Hyde Park Art Center
5020 South Cornell Ave., Chicago
www.hydeparkart.org

FRIDAY 3

EXHIBITION OPENING

This is 606: Ray Pride
The Architrave
1433 West Chicago Ave., Chicago
thearchitrouve.com

TUESDAY 7

EVENT

Young Architects Forum
5:30 p.m.
Rock Bottom Brewery
1 West Grand Ave., Chicago
www.meetup.com/ChicagoYAF

WEDNESDAY 8

LECTURE

Rachel Crowl
Outside In: fc STUDIO inc.
12:15 p.m.
The John Buck Company
Lecture Hall Gallery
224 South Michigan Ave., Chicago
www.architecture.org

WITH THE KIDS

Art Afternoon: Photo Portraits
12:00 p.m.
Smart Museum of Art
5550 South Greenwood Ave., Chicago
smartmuseum.uchicago.edu

THURSDAY 9

EVENT

Working with an Architect
7:00 p.m.
Wilmette Public Library
1242 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, IL
www.aiachicago.org

FRIDAY 10

EXHIBITION OPENING

Catherine Yass: Descent
Saint Louis Art Museum
One Fine Arts Drive, Forest Park, St. Louis
www.slam.org

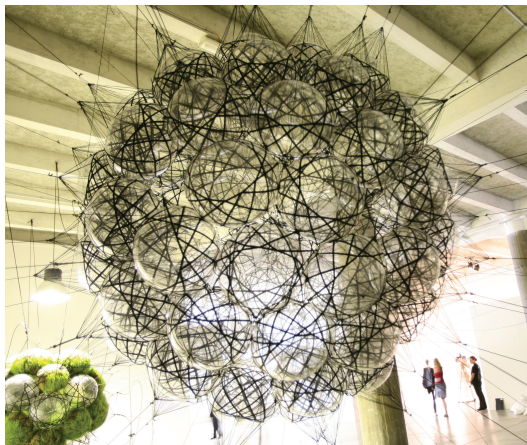


COURTESY CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

CHICAGO MODEL CITY

Chicago Architecture Foundation
224 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago
Through November 20

The city of Chicago appears in many different guises in *Chicago Model City*, a new multimedia exhibit at the Chicago Architecture Foundation. The show, which is part of the city's celebration of the 100th anniversary of Daniel Burnham's transformative Plan of Chicago, looks at how planners—both historic and contemporary—have envisioned reshaping the city. The diverse plans attempt to answer such questions about urbanization in Chicago as “How should we think about increasing density?” and “How can we conserve the region's natural resources?” Photographs, maps, videos, and digital visualizations reveal a fascinating trajectory over the years in the city's approach to planning, including some ideologies that have since been discredited, such as urban renewal's faith that erasing old development could cure social ills, and others that have only become more crucial in recent years, such as the impact of the city's organization on the health of its citizens and environment. Particularly compelling is the exhibit's centerpiece: a large-scale model of Chicago's Loop, the first model of its kind created in the U.S. using rapid prototyping technology.



COURTESY TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY

TOMAS SARACENO: LIGHTER THAN AIR

Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis
Through August 30

Argentine artist Tomas Saraceno's imagination runs free in a new exhibition at the Walker Art Center. Equal parts science, technological innovation, and fantasy, Saraceno's installations, sculptures, and photographs span the last six years and propose a variety of ideas for reshaping our societies to make them more sustainable. With a big-picture exuberance and optimism that recalls the spirit of visionaries like Buckminster Fuller, Saraceno conceives of the exhibition as a single organism, connecting different pieces to each other with networks of cords or ropes. These spill into the venue's staircases and hallways, crossing over from indoor to outdoor spaces: In *Iridescent Planet*, a solar-paneled balloon harnesses energy from the Walker's terrace and channels it into other pieces, feeding the grass in the greenhouse titled *32SW stay green/Flying Garden/Air-Port-City*, which in turn irrigates a nearby cluster of spheres. Especially poetic is the exhibition's centerpiece, *Girasol (Turning Sun)*, in which a wind turbine powers a video camera connected to a sunflower, which records a shifting view of the sky as the flower turns, seeking sunlight. The cumulative effect is a reminder of the interconnectedness of the world's natural and built ecosystems and the comprehensiveness of Saraceno's vision.

VISIT WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM/DIARY FOR COMPLETE NORTHEAST DIARY LISTINGS

WRIGHT IN PLAIN SIGHT

Frank Lloyd Wright:
From Within Outward
Guggenheim Museum
1071 Fifth Avenue,
New York
Through August 23

*Gordon Strong Automobile
Objective and Planetarium,
Sugarloaf Mountain,
Maryland (1924-1925).*

COURTESY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FOUNDATION

Is Frank Lloyd Wright an architect? The answer may seem as clear as the denomination of the pope or what a bear does in the woods, but if we think about it, the answer becomes less and less clear. While Wright, in his vast body of work, clearly deployed the mysteries of architecture with unique mastery, his enduring identity seems far more a matter of popular culture than of design discourse: You're more likely to see his work on, say, a mug or a mousepad than buried deep within the research slides of some M.Arch candidate's thesis PowerPoint. Like the Monet of *Waterlilies* or the Rodin of *The Thinker* (or, increasing-

ly, the Gehry of Bilbao), the Wright of 1959's Guggenheim Museum in New York can seem a marvel for mass middlebrow connoisseurship rather than an abiding reference for architects in the manner of those other 20th-century titans, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. Architects admire his talent but don't look to him to see how it's really done.

Wright hides in plain sight. The great length of his career and life (1867–1959), and constant if haphazard tectonic and formal experimentation, mean that many of his innovations—such as an enduring tendency to move structure away from a building's

periphery to its center—have become so absorbed into modern architecture as to be invisible. And as with many architects, his last works are the biggest but not the best. Then there's the cape. And the cane. And *The Fountainhead*. And all the other tragicomic scandals of his familial and communal life. And the tendency, perhaps reinforced through his 1930s encounters with proto-New Age mystic G.I. Gurdjieff, towards the cultish, the batty, and the tediously grandiose. "He has been surrounded," as a 1946 *Life Magazine* profile noted, "in an aura of fame that has probably not been accorded an architect

since Michelangelo," sailing through self-generated controversy with "a serene egotism that is attained by few men."

Into this dilemma of marginality and magnificence steps *Frank Lloyd Wright: From Within Outward*, the current retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum, celebrating the 50th anniversary of that building. Despite a few woolly references to the "ineffable" in the wall text, the show does a cool and comprehensive job of presenting Wright's oeuvre, from familiar hits like 1908's Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois, to obscure, late-career oddities like a 1957 urban plan

for Baghdad. Much of this is pleasingly defamiliarized in the form of expressive, newly created models and animations (the latter by students at Harvard's GSD), replacing the usual numbingly iconic photos. Especially coherent are two dedicated galleries that focus on Wright's work on houses and cities. A delicately exploded and suspended model, produced by Brooklyn's Situ Studio, of the crafty material components of the Herbert Jacobs House (the first of the low-cost Usonian Houses built in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1936) is alone worth the exhibit's steep price of admission. Models of Wright's unbuilt 1947 megastructure for the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers in Pittsburgh, and of The Living City, a 1958 update of Wright's prewar *Broadacre City* utopia featuring atomic barges and personal helicopters, present a dense, high-tech counterpoint to the languid pastoralism we might expect.

The exhibit's vivid new models, several in the same crisp white as the Guggenheim itself, recall Philip Johnson's famous decision to leave models by "the greatest architect of the 19th century" in the antechamber of his epochal 1932 International Style exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art. Wright is hard to curate and universalize. Some of this is due to the intricacy and inimitability of his formal language, which, unlike Johnson's doctrinal version of European modernism, was difficult to assimilate

and codify: a syncretism of Sullivanesque arabesque and massing, Japanese asymmetries and horizontalities, and sneakily efficient industrial modularity that equaled in self-referential complexity and clarity the Beaux Arts classicism that it did much to finally erase from mainstream taste. And some of this might be due to the possibility that Wright was among other things a profoundly regional architect, whose strongest work related deeply to the horizontal physical landscape and hierarchical social aspirations of a suburban Middle West, from Southern Wisconsin through Illinois to Western Pennsylvania.

Yet the Guggenheim's exhibit reveals, through Wright, something universal about what it means to be an architect. Its great gift is the long sequence of original drawings, pleasingly presented on tables at the angle and height of the boards on which they would have been made. They're a mix, both meticulous and motley, of presentation boards, working drawings, design documents, sketches, and scribbles across three-quarters of a century and the whole length of the Guggenheim ramp. In ink and graphite and pastel on tracing paper, linen, and, in the case of Wright's post-fire rebuilding plans for his Taliesin East home, brown butcher's paper, they accumulate into a remarkably intimate document and a lifetime of thought. Despite Wright's reputation for graphic virtuosity (much of it due to the work of delineator and archi-

Behind the Facades

Jean Prouvé: *Œuvre complète/Complete Works, Volume 4: 1954–1984*
Peter Sulzer
Birkhäuser, \$149.85

The recent publication of the fourth and final volume of Peter Sulzer's *catalogue raisonné* of the work of Jean Prouvé (1901–84) concludes a quarter-century effort to bring order to the remarkable output of a man who, though neither architect nor engineer, is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential figures in modern architecture. *Jean Prouvé: Œuvre complète/Complete Works, Volume 4: 1954–1984* covers the period of Prouvé's life from his departing the factory he founded at Maxéville, near Nancy, France, to his death at age 83. Prouvé began his career after World War I as an architectural metalworker. He made

building elements like lighting fixtures, elevator cages, operating rooms, and sanatorium furnishings. His first complete building in folded sheetmetal, a bus station for Citroën, was completed in 1933. For the rest of his career, he was preoccupied by industrial building systems. After World War II, his Maxéville factory produced both the furniture so sought after by collectors today and the iconic Tropical Houses (1950–51). In 1953, Prouvé lost control of his factory to his major shareholder, a French aluminum monopoly.

Sulzer's portrait of the final decades of Prouvé's life is more

nuanced than the various non-academic biographies published to date. These tend to assume that Prouvé in some sense "died" the day he lost his factory, and with it the ability to make architecture using his own means of production and a closed system of Prouvé-designed elements. It is true that some of the massive housing projects to which Prouvé contributed his curtain wall know-how as a consultant were of questionable social merit. But Prouvé readily admitted that he took this work when he had to—often to create jobs for friends and associates—and regretted it. When he could, he focused on projects like the House for Better Days (1956), a prototype for low-cost housing for the homeless erected on the banks of the Seine by the Abbé Pierre, a cleric and activist. A famously modest man, Prouvé embraced the collective aspects of building, often carrying water for architects by default. His modesty

and good will toward architecture was not always reciprocated by practitioners who, in the words of Reyner Banham, were content to "leave the facades to Prouvé."

Among the highlights of *Volume 4* is Prouvé's own house at Nancy, built of elements scavenged from his factory in the days leading up to his ouster. Pieced together on a steeply pitched plot of land deemed unbuildable by the Nancy bourgeoisie, it is a masterful recycling operation, demonstrating Prouvé's ability to work with an economy of materials and means. It is not a prototype; rather, it signals the end of an era. Prouvé's uncertain position in the industry reflected a growing bureaucratization of architecture and engineering as professions during his lifetime. There was simply no comfortable place in the system for an artisan-entrepreneur. Still, the projects that Sulzer catalogs comprise an essential reference work for an impressive and quietly



Panel curtain wall in Orleans-La-Source (1965-1968).

ERIKA SULZER-KLEINMEIER

influential footprint that stretches over three decades.

ROBERT M. RUBIN IS CO-AUTHOR, WITH OLIVIER CINQUALBRE, OF *TROPICAL HOUSE*, RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY THE CENTRE POMPIDOU.

tect Marion Mahony-Griffin), many of these drawings have a certain searching clumsiness: Unlike the work of a Francesco Borromini or a Michael Webb, they don't always impress as independent works of art. Instead, to see an otherwise meticulous ink drawing suddenly over-written with a smudgy rethink in graphite; to see the same forms (like a hexagonal lozenge or a low glass dome) recur and evolve from discovery to signature to mannerism; to note a cryptic, long accumulation of numbers (dimensions? costs?) in a margin; to see observably distinct hands writing notes and communicating across a single drawing: All this is to be given a portrait of the solitary and communal process behind making architecture, far more laborious and glorious, more awkward and tender, than that narrow heroism to which—by those in popular culture who look up to him, as much as by those in design who overlook him—Wright has been reduced.

NEW YORK-BASED ARCHITECT THOMAS DE MONCHAUX IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.

SMALL THINKING

The Edge of Intent
Museum of Contemporary Photography
600 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago
Through July 5

The current show at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, *The Edge of Intent*, attempts to reveal disconnects between utopian ideals endemic to urban design and the social, physical, and environmental realities of urban life. Ten artists exhibit work ranging from digitally manipulated urban interiors to aerial photography to mixed media cartographic collages. In the year that Chicago celebrates the centennial of the Burnham Plan, *The Edge of Intent* is a reproach to architects and urban designers who aspire to think big without considering underrepresented constituencies, local contingencies, or temporal variability of the cities in which they operate.

Too often, the curators have positioned work in *The Edge of Intent* to illustrate the inadequacies of design as a tool for shaping and managing cities. The result is an untimely and passive criticality—a call for inaction when the economic, environmental,

and social conditions of our cities beckon designers and architects to radically rethink our urban future. Simon Menner's photographs, for example, document the way the homeless occupy the marginal spaces of formally conceived cities like Chicago and Paris. One striking image portrays a nighttime scene on the Seine. The river shimmers in the foreground, framed by stately Haussmann-era facades and reflecting the city lights, while Notre Dame Cathedral is gently lit in the background. The viewer will likely scan the image for a protracted second before noticing a group of homeless people huddled in niches in the masonry wall of the river. The homeless and their contingent dwellings starkly juxtapose the designed elegance of the surrounding city. The implication is that the architectural expression of the city is beholden to the rich while marginalizing the poor. The point of the piece, consistent with the curatorial intent of the show, is valid. But it is not subtle or shocking, nor does it offer productive criticism for today's designers.

Fortunately, much of the work in *The Edge of Intent* transcends curatorial positioning to probe potentially productive relationships between formally designed cities and the spatial or temporal contingencies within. Eric Smith's digitally altered photographs of the opulent and decaying Michigan Central Train Depot in

Detroit are worth the trip to the museum. The haunting depictions of urban decay challenge the viewer to reevaluate traditional notions of successful urban vitality, suggesting that we reappropriate the aesthetically sublime monuments that are produced by dying cities. Similarly, a series of photographs by Joel Sternfeld documents the spaces of Manhattan's High Line, an abandoned train line that until recently was overgrown and in disrepair. Far from simply juxtaposing the tall grass and weeds of the elevated rail platform to the surrounding city, the photographs suggest the potential of the abandoned train platform to provide public space that blurs traditional distinctions between the artificial and the natural. Famously, the viaduct's potential

has now been appreciated in the form of a public park by Diller Scofidio + Renfro and Field Operations. Finally, Andrew Harrison has a series of pieces in the show that collages maps of New Jersey into the shapes of historic utopian urban plans such as Brasilia and *The Radiant City*. Far from a simple ironic criticism of utopian plans, Harrison's work suggests a playful relationship between idealization and local contingencies embedded in the maps.

For architects and urban designers, work in *The Edge of Intent* offers food for thought, if one escapes the stifling framing and overtly anti-design mentality of its curators.

MCLAIN CLUTTER IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.



Eric Smith, *Untitled*, from the series *Michigan Central Train Depot* (2007).

COURTESY MONROE GALLERY OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Walter Washington Convention Center
Washington DC

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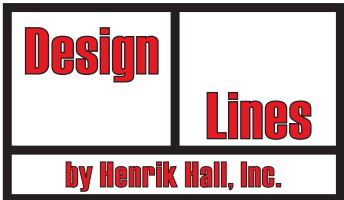


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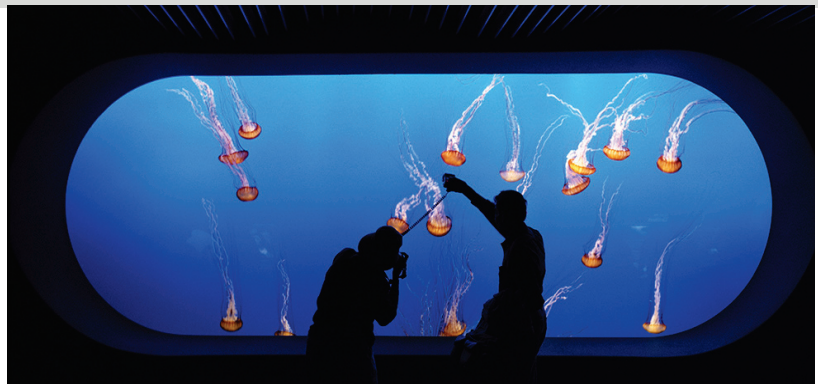


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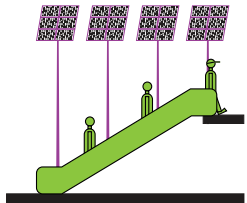
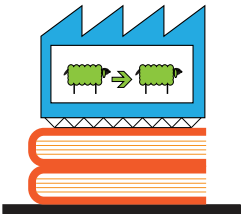
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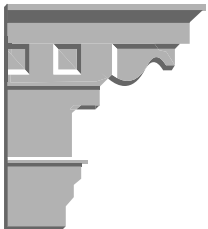
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LEFT: NATHAN KEAY; RIGHT: ESTATE OF R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER

Getting Fuller

The work and ideas of Buckminster Fuller have been an important touchstone for many of today's architects, designers, and artists. In her essay for the Whitney Museum's publication that accompanied the recent Fuller exhibition, Elizabeth Smith, chief curator at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), traced these influences on a current generation, including Danish-born artist Olafur Eliasson. With major exhibitions on both Fuller and Eliasson now on view at the MCA, AN asked Smith to discuss Fuller's continued relevance, interest, and significance with Eliasson.

Elizabeth Smith: You've been thinking about Fuller for a long time. What is it about his work in relationship to your own that you find productive?

Olafur Eliasson: With Fuller's work, there's experimentation on so many levels, and of course I have been inspired over the years again and again, beginning with one of my very first pieces titled *8900054*. Principally, it was a Fuller dome, and that was the first time I worked with a mathematician and geometrist called Einar Thorsteinn who was a friend of Fuller. My idea was to make a work almost like a Fuller ready-made. At that time, in '96, he was not at all exposed in the architectural frame of reference, so people reacted to him as a utopian and a person who was very hard to map within the context of spatial thinking. What is exciting and interesting is that in the last 15 years, he's been integrated into architectural or spatial history in a much more performative and productive way.

Tell me more about Einar Thorsteinn and your collaboration with him.

Well, there is so much to be said about him but most importantly, he was educated in the late 1960s at Frei Otto's office in Stuttgart, and he was involved as a student with the erection of the Munich Stadium that became so famous with the

tensile suspended roof structures. Einar then went back to Iceland. In 1973, he founded Constructions Lab and although involved with architecture, he moved on into different types of mathematical and geometrical research. He also invited Fuller, whom he had first met in '66, to come to Iceland. Einar had done a handful of dome houses where people are actually living to this day in Iceland. On top of that, Einar is an artist himself and is developing a number of different projects on his own terms. He has worked in my studio for more than ten years now, and when I say work, I mean that he is deeply involved as a collaborator, and sometimes solves pragmatic challenges with me. Coming from Frei Otto and Fuller, through crystallographic and spatial pattern principles that typically derive from non-modern or non-Euclidian languages, Einar is of course a great resource and of much inspiration to me. I myself have looked into both Fuller and Frei Otto but also into people like Paolo Soleri and Felix Candela and others, who have had these utopian approaches. The inspiration is not necessarily a formal one, based on the language they created; I do think that one of the most striking things about these people and Fuller especially is their conviction in the worth of what they were doing. They would link social aspects with engineering and environmental questions. They would not compartmentalize things like one sees in the general architectural practice of today; they would challenge everything at the same time in a very productive way.

Do you think it was easier for an artist like yourself to recuperate the ideas of Fuller?

Well, as an artist, I look for languages where I can examine and challenge ideas about singularity—about the person in the world—and about plurality—about collectivity in the world. Fuller successfully created a language that sustains a clear

notion of what individuality potentially could be and the sense of responsibility that an individual has. On the other hand, within that language, within that same question, he also has a specific idea about collectivity and its consequences and what kind of responsibility that requires. If you think about it, there are not so many types of spatial practice that would sustain both an explicit idea of individuality and an explicit idea of collectivity. You could say that typically, you have either collective kinds of spaces or spaces that are very much based on individuality. And today I find that we have to take up the great challenge in society to embrace collectivity *and* individuality rather than polarizing the two, which is the case on the political scene, for instance.

Was agency of the individual as important an idea for Fuller as it is for you?

I'm not saying that he was not a utopian thinker who to a great extent externalized fundamental values into a kind of a dot on the horizon where we would want to be heading. I think he was, as were his contemporaries, utopian in the sense that he implicitly worked with this idea of, "Once we get there, we will be fine." Where clearly now, both as an artist but also as a participant on Spaceship Earth, I say we have to be fine while we go along, and it doesn't work to externalize our values into a certain goal; the process with which we move along needs to perform the values by which we live. So one could say that there has been an internalization of Fuller's values in terms of his utopian tendencies. The struggle we see in architecture today is: To what extent can one embody the environmental movement, the green movement? In architecture there is that little bit of struggle now whether we should be modern and claim a goal and then create a green movement, or whether we should try to mobilize, create an architecture based on our individual sense of responsibility. One could split those two kinds of architecture into a normative architecture, which is the modern one that tries to create a generalized idea of how we sustain ecological architectural principles, and this is something that Fuller in a sense initiated, and a more non-normative move-

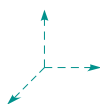
Left: Olafur Eliasson, *Inverted Berlin Sphere* (2005). Right: Buckminster Fuller and students on the first model geodesic dome (1948).

ment that we individually define because this also allows for a different kind of emotional involvement.

To me it seems that Fuller's approach is as much about setting a goal and pragmatically reaching it as it is about living one's life in a way that significantly demonstrates ethical values.

Looking at Fuller's work, the question is also, what does an exhibition like this do? I think there is an incredible potential in Fuller, but how are his theory, his arguments, values, and tools reintroduced to a contemporary spatial practice? How does one see the tools in today's context rather than as historical tools? I'm very interested in that question: Are we looking at new drawings by Fuller that happened to be made 50 years ago, or are we looking at 50-year-old drawings today? I think it's incredibly important to consider his contribution contemporary. I think we need to adopt a contemporary view as we walk into the museum and we have to imagine that Fuller is a 23-year-old architecture student. That activates or introduces a certain performative aspect to an exhibition like the one at the MCA, which I think can be strikingly convincing. I find it productive because clearly, the effort in the show has been to describe the legacy of Fuller, and he in every way deserves that and it hasn't been done so far. But we also have to acknowledge that this can be slightly stigmatizing because you suddenly see the tools in a vitrine rather than in your hands. And as an artist I believe that one of the great challenges, and one of the great things about art, is that it insists on being in your hands rather than in a vitrine. So I think the greatest potential of a show like this becomes apparent if we consider it a fully contemporary exhibition.

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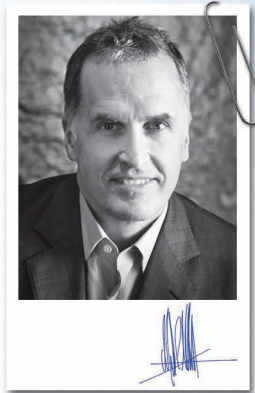
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MY TURN

Mark Sexton, FAIA, Partner, Krueck + Sexton Architects, Chicago, Illinois

The Spertus Institute was a challenging project. It is designed with 726 pieces of glass fabricated in 556 unique shapes, including parallelograms that tilt in two directions. The integrity of the design relied on the absolute flatness of the glass, so we used 50% thicker exterior panels to reduce roller wave. We wanted a very neutral, low-reflective look but with high-performance numbers—especially in UV transmittance. Other companies just can't fabricate glass with this level of complexity. We worked with Viracon from the very beginning of the concept. When you only have one material to work with, you better be confident about how it's engineered and fabricated. At the end of the day, Viracon is just as concerned about the quality of the product as they are about the quality of the process.

Do you want a turn? Contact us for details. Call 800.533.2080 or visit viracon.com.



*Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies
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Glass:
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